Passionate about social change: an IPA study exploring the experiences of young people engaged in community action.

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Abstract

Recent years have seen a rise in the prevalence of mental health problems, with children and young people from socially and economically disadvantaged areas particularly affected. To address these difficulties, there is a shift in favour towards community psychology interventions which work at multiple levels to improve well-being and to challenge the status quo, addressing the systemic and social conditions which contribute to psychological problems occurring.

Following a systematic literature review which identified considerable gaps in the literature, particularly in the UK context, this study aimed to add to the research base on community psychology interventions through an exploration of youths' experiences. Semi-structured interviews were carried out with six young people (aged 16-25) who had taken up roles with a youth-led Young Advisors (YA) organisation operating according to a community psychology model. The organisation was located in an ethnically-diverse London borough with high rates of child poverty and gang-related youth violence. Interview transcripts were analysed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis.

A community psychology lens was used when exploring the analysed interview data, with themes emerging for each participant. These led to the identification of six superordinate themes occurring across the participant group: conceptualisation of the YA role, YA and the construct of self, personal growth through YA involvement, factors attributed to the effectiveness of the role, challenges in role, and factors contributing to continued involvement. The findings were discussed in the context of the existent literature. Implications for practice for Educational Psychologists were considered, including ideas for future research. It is argued that community psychology interventions offer an attractive and effective model for engaging youths, including those from marginalised and disadvantaged communities, offering alternative solutions to the individually focused, professionally driven interventions for mental health and wellbeing that currently dominate in the UK.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Youth Mental Health

Mental health is understood to be "a positive state of well-being, one which allows individuals to fully engage with others, cope with the stresses of life and realise their abilities" (World Health Organisation, 2001, p.1). Concerningly, recent years have seen a rise in the prevalence of mental health problems. According to the most recent comprehensive survey on child mental health in England, which was commissioned by the National Health Service (NHS) Digital (2017), one in eight (12.8%) of the 5 to 19 year olds surveyed had at least one 'mental disorder', according to the International Classification of Disease (ICD-10) diagnostic criteria, with emotional disorders found to be the most prevalent in this age group (8.1%), followed by behavioural or conduct disorders (4.6%), attention and hyperactivity disorders (1.6%), and other less common conditions such as Autism Spectrum Disorder, eating disorders, and tic disorders (2.1%). The survey results found rates of mental disorders to increase with age, and a slight increase in prevalence was found over time, comparing results with similar surveys conducted by the Office for National Statistics in 1999 and 2004. A systematic review of international prevalence studies suggested similar rates of mental disorders in children and adolescents worldwide, at 13.4% (Polanczyk et al., 2015).

Addressing young people's mental health problems is vital to facilitate wellbeing and social functioning in later life. If left untreated, children and young people with mental health difficulties are at increased risk of a wide range of adverse long-term outcomes including poor educational attainment, continuing mental health difficulties in adulthood, physical health problems such as alcohol and drug misuse, higher rates of unemployment and dependency on welfare payments, risk of homelessness, relationship problems, and engagement in all types of criminal activity (Parsonage et al., 2014). Mental health problems also impose a considerable economic burden on the state; a recent report published by the Organisation for Economic

Cooperation and Development (2018) suggested that mental ill-health is costing the United Kingdom (UK) more than £94 billion annually, including costs of intervention, social supports, and losses to the economy from people who are unemployed. As a consequence, there is increasing recognition of the value and potential lifetime benefits of early intervention to prevent and treat mental health problems during childhood, adolescence, and young adulthood (Furber et al., 2015; Knapp et al., 2011; O'Connell et al., 2009; Sandler et al., 2014). Accordingly, there is growing political emphasis on mental health in children and young people with a range of UK government initiatives focusing on service provision such as Closing the Gap (Department of Health, 2014), Future in Mind (Department of Health & NHS England, 2015), and Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools (Department for Education, 2016).

1.2 Interventions Promoting Youth Mental Health and Wellbeing

Programmes promoting children and young people's mental wellbeing range from targeted interventions for individuals showing signs of mental health difficulties, to universal preventative approaches which aim to improve and sustain psychological wellbeing (Stallard, 2010). Prevention programmes can be found in a variety of settings including schools, primary care, and community settings, and they are designed to reduce risk factors and increase protective factors related to mental health, often for selected at-risk populations (O'Connell et al., 2009). Risk factors such as poverty and extreme need for approval from peers are understood to increase the likelihood of a child's problem behaviours and decrease the likelihood of positive outcomes, whereas protective factors such as academic achievement and strong child/carer attachment act as buffers moderating the influence exerted by risk factors; for both, factors can be identified at the individual, peer group, family, school, and community levels (Catalano et al., 2002). Strengthening protective factors is understood to make an important contribution to reducing risk for those who are most vulnerable, thereby improving their chances of achieving positive long-term outcomes (McPherson et al., 2013).

Nevertheless, a concerning number of children and young people experiencing mental health difficulties do not have access to specialist help. According to the NHS Digital (2017) national survey study, one in three (33.6%) of the children and young people aged 5-19 with a mental disorder had had no contact with professionals (e.g., teachers, primary care professionals, mental health specialists) concerning their worries about their mental health; of those who did access a specialist service, one in five were required to wait over six months for their initial appointment. According to another recent report completed by the Education Policy Institute, specialist children's mental health services have seen a sharp rise in the number of referrals received but an average of one in four children and young people referred to them have had their referrals rejected (Crenna-Jennings & Hutchinson, 2018). It has long been argued that these services are inadequately resourced and incapable of coping with the rising demand (Davis et al. 2000). But while low rates of access to mental health services are undoubtedly linked to the unavailability of appropriate services, other factors also need to be considered, including the perceived stigma of attendance at such specialist health services (MacKay, 2007). Furthermore, as far back as 2008, a Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) review suggested that children and young people found their services to be less "well known, accessible, responsive or child-centred" than they should be (Department of Children, 2008, p. 9). As a consequence, alternative programmes promoting children and young people's mental health are increasingly being provided by community groups and school settings.

Traditionally, interventions to address mental health problems predominantly focused at the individual level (e.g., psychotherapy, behavioural therapy, pharmacology) or the interpersonal level (e.g., parent training, family therapy). However, it is increasingly recognised that the effectiveness of such interventions may be limited if environmental and systemic factors are not targeted also (Castillo et al., 2019). In the United States (US), Wight et al. (2006) conducted a large-scale national study examining the impact of contextual-level factors on

adolescent mental health, and they found socioeconomic disadvantage to be positively associated with depressive symptoms, whereas high perceived support from family, friends, and other adults, was found to offset poor mental health. Their results indicated that programmes focusing solely on individual- or interpersonal/family-level processes within disadvantaged contexts may be insufficient at stemming psychological distress in young people. Similarly, the NHS Digital (2017) national study on child mental health found mental disorders to be more common in children living in lower-income households, and in those with low levels of social support and smaller social networks. Other studies have also demonstrated the relevance of social disadvantage and social isolation to mental health (Adriaanse et al., 2014; Drukker et al., 2006; Tyler et al., 2018) including higher levels of anti-social behaviour (Kjellstrand & Eddy, 2011; Knutson et al., 2004). Individual mental well-being has been found to be affected by physical and social environmental factors such as neighbour noise, over-crowding in the home, fear of crime, and availability of escape facilities such as community resources and green spaces (Guite et al., 2006). Furthermore, research suggests that neighbourhood quality can act as a buffer against the negative effects of poor quality housing on mental wellbeing; lower-income families in substandard housing rely on vibrant social networks in their neighbourhoods to maintain psychological well-being, and if the local environment can facilitate safe and informal social interaction, families can develop strong social ties and experience positive social interactions, as well as accessing personal respite and safe play areas for their children (Jones-Rounds et al., 2014). Social-ecological theory also holds that there is an intersection between the individual and the environment, with individual protective factors, such as personality characteristics (e.g., temperament) and social determinants (e.g., social support, social cohesion), allowing some young people in disadvantaged environments to achieve more positive outcomes (Lee & Stewart, 2013).

Neighbourhood social capital is another construct which can be used to portray how the

individual is influenced by their environment; rooted in the work of the sociologist, Durkheim (1893), social capital can be understood in terms of formal and informal social connections and networks, which in turn result in an accumulation of reciprocity, obligations and shared identities, as well as access to support and resources (Bourdieu, 1986; McPherson et al., 2013). Social capital is also related to an individual's sense of belonging and to their civic participation and trust in a community (Ahn & Davis, 2016). Multiple dimensions exist within the concept of social capital. Firstly, social capital can be classified into a behavioural component such as participation in community activities (i.e., structural social capital) or a perceptual or cognitive component, such as trust and shared values between community members (i.e., cognitive social capital); connections can then occur within these components, concerning individuals who identify as similar to each other (i.e., bonding social capital), or to individuals who are different, such as those from outside one's immediate circle or social group (i.e., bridging social capital) (De Silva et al., 2005). Additionally, linking social capital relates to relationships formed between individuals with varying levels of power, potentially important for availing of support from formal institutions, providing people with more opportunities, choice, and power (Boeck et al., 2009). Studies have shown a relationship between neighbourhood social capital and individual mental health and well-being (De Silva et al., 2005; Fone et al., 2014; Meltzer et al., 2007; Stafford et al., 2008).

Adolescence is a time of major life transition and autonomy, during which the individual's social network is expanded and relations with peers assume increased importance (Helsen et al., 2000). For youths in socially disadvantaged communities, the assumption of adult responsibility can be particularly dramatic and abrupt, creating an added vulnerability (Dashiff et al., 2009). These adolescents are often aware of their family's financial difficulties and research has shown an association between adolescent maladjustment and perceived financial difficulties of the family, specifically with depression and harmful drinking patterns (Fröjd et

al., 2006). Poverty also appears to have cumulative effects, with teenage boys exposed to persistent poverty over time, more vulnerable to low educational attainment and displays of anti-social behaviour (Pagani & Boulerice, 1999). Furthermore, identity formation is the primary task of adolescence (Erikson, 1980) but Phillips and Pittman (2003) theorise that the marginalisation, stress, and social stigma experienced by many 'poor' adolescents, coupled with the nature of the limited opportunities that they are presented with, combine to produce a context that is not conducive to the exploration of identity and may lead to the adoption of a negative identity and failure to realise their full potential. Briggs (2009) lamented the often unrelenting media broadcasting of negative discourse and images of young people and "the problems of adolescence" (p.49). This negative discourse is further amplified for socially disadvantaged youths, with these young people often labelled as 'at risk' and 'risky', "a threat to themselves and a potential threat to the social and health (and hence moral) orders" (Brown et al., 2013, p. 333). Therefore, to facilitate inclusion and equality, it is vital that disadvantaged young people have opportunities to get involved in positive youth development organisations in their communities, to allow for the growth of social networks, along with the fostering of healthy social norms.

The World Health Organisation and the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (2014, p.13) called for "a shift of emphasis…towards preventing common mental disorders such as anxiety and depression by action on the social determinants of health, as well as improving the treatment of existing conditions… as many of the causes and triggers of mental disorder lie in social, economic, and political spheres – in the conditions of daily life". Community psychology is increasingly recognised as a suitable approach to address these issues.

1.2.1 Community Psychology

According to the British Psychological Society (BPS) (2015), community psychology is focused on understanding individuals within their social contexts, recognising how wider

societal and structural arrangements impact on individual health and wellbeing. Community psychology is psycho-political, addressing power imbalances, and seeking to understand how forces such as inequality, discrimination, exclusion, and oppression impact on the human experience (BPS, 2015; Prilleltensky, 2014). There is a focus on community-led social change and supporting marginalised, vulnerable and disempowered populations (such as the homeless, minority and indigenous communities, individuals with learning disabilities, and young people from socially disadvantaged communities) to be partners in creating that change (Kidd et al., 2018). The approach emphasises the competence of individuals and their communities and it appreciates cultural and personal diversity (Bailey, 2018). From a community psychology lens, individuals' well-being and quality of life are dependent upon a person-environment congruence (Kreutz, 2014) with social, and environmental elements viewed as significant factors influencing the development and expression of 'problem' behaviours (Chavis & Wandersman, 2002). Requiring that individuals conform to a particular standard is viewed as increasing the likelihood that some will be considered maladjusted, and therefore community psychology interventions attempt to increase behavioural options, redistribute resources, expand cultural and environmental choices, and foster the acceptance of variability (Bailey, 2018).

Community Psychology Interventions.

As a counter to traditional psychology approaches which tend to be more deficit-focused, and involve individual-oriented service modalities, community psychology is founded on values of empowerment, social justice, citizen participation and collaboration (Townley et al., 2018). Interventions work at multiple levels to improve well-being (i.e., ameliorative) and to challenge the status quo, addressing the systemic and social conditions which contribute to the problems occurring (i.e., transformative), thereby pairing wellness with fairness (Prilleltensky, 2014). According to Evans and Prilleltensky (2007), wellness or well-

being involves the fulfilment of the personal, relational, and collective needs and aspirations of individuals and their communities, and therefore interventions need to address all three levels to have maximum impact. As a consequence, community-based interventions frequently target multiple outcomes. Prevention and human-service interventions are particularly promoted and valued (Bailey, 2018). Referred to as community-based participatory action research (Israel et al., 1998), community psychology strives to ensure the cultural and ecological appropriateness of interventions and research, and therefore seeks active collaboration between researchers and members of subgroups in the planning and implementation stages of a project (Grant et al., 2017). Involvement with community psychology interventions can also raise awareness and develop socio-political or critical consciousness in young people by providing them with opportunities to "develop their power to perceive critically the way they exist in the world with which and in which they find themselves; they come to see the world not as a static reality, but as a reality in the process, in transformation" (Freire, 2005, p. 83).

The BPS (2015) attributes the current shift in favour towards community psychology to several reasons: services are now expected to intervene at wider systemic levels to help prevent distress and to avoid the discourse of blame; community psychology can help to reduce barriers to engagement by offering community-led and co-produced approaches which service users perceive as more appealing, accessible, asset-focused and non-stigmatising; and in an era of economic austerity and growing inequality, community psychology can help to provide services which are preventative, proactive, and financially stable.

At an international level, an example of a highly successful community psychology intervention is the Canadian Better Beginnings programme (Worton et al., 2014), which was a holistic and universally available early childhood initiative implemented to promote the healthy development of children and families through the fostering of community capacity in economically deprived neighbourhoods. Worton et al. (2014) found the programme to be cost-

effective and to lead to a range of improved outcomes including a decrease in childhood behavioural difficulties, and increases in community participation, access to local services, and neighbourhood satisfaction. Within the UK, meanwhile, the charity, MAC-UK, developed the Music&Change intervention in collaboration with excluded young people who were facing multiple challenges in their community (Zlotowitz et al., 2016). Music&Change was an innovative approach, based on the teaching of contemporary music skills, which was co-produced with the youth participants who were aged between 16 and 22. The intervention aimed to use the medium of music project activities to foster relationships and to address the participants' mental health and related needs, with the ultimate goal to reduce offending rates in the community. Results from an ethnographic study suggested that the intervention was valued by the young participants who had not previously enjoyed successful engagement with professional services (Zlotowitz et al., 2016). The findings subsequently led to the development of the Integrate model, which was another multi-level co-produced community psychology initiative implemented by MAC-UK, aiming to address the social and health inequalities of excluded young people in London by supporting participants to create change for themselves and their communities (Faulconbridge et al., 2016).

The Young Advisors (YA) charity in the UK also operates according to a community psychology model. The charity comprises of a network of social franchises across the UK, which are managed and offered cohesion and support by the central YA charity based in Manchester. However, the individual franchises operate independently, planning and delivering projects based on the needs of their local communities. One of the London-based franchises of the charity will be the focus of this study. This specific franchise is located in an ethnically-diverse London borough, ranked one of the highest for entrants to the youth justice system compared to statistically similar areas nationally; gang-related youth violence is a particular problem. It is close to the bottom of the most deprived local authorities in England and it is also

one the most deprived out of the 33 London boroughs, with a high rate of children living in poverty.

This specific YA is a youth-led community-based charity which recruits and trains local young people aged 16-25 as consultants in community regeneration and youth involvement. These youths then contribute to various projects of benefit to their peers and their local communities. YA supports community leaders to engage young people in community life, and they are involved in local decision-making and service improvement, working in partnership with many local organisations including the police, community sector and education bodies, public health and the NHS. For example, YA members with experience of the youth justice system attended the Youth Justice Convention, delivering workshops to professionals and sharing their experiences with delegates at the conference. Meanwhile, as part of the Youth Mental Health Ambassadors Project, members of YA took up roles as Youth Mental Health Ambassadors to contribute towards CAMHS service design, delivery and evaluation; they worked with partners and clinicians to capture the views of young people in the borough, specifically addressing the promotion of positive mental health and the reduction of risk relating to the development of mental health difficulties. As part of their involvement in the project, the Youth Mental Health Ambassadors completed accredited training in Youth Mental Health First Aid. More recently, YA established the Streetbase programme, which is a peer-to-peer street engagement programme delivered by young people, intending to increase awareness and access to youth services by signposting youths inthe community to positive opportunities, activities, events and support, to help prevent offending and anti-social behaviour in the borough. These peer supporters have received training and accreditation to patrol hotspot areas and deliver peer workshops on topics affecting young people, such as knife crime.

This research will adopt a community psychology lens to explore the experiences of young people involved with the YA franchise. MacKay (2006) advocated for the positioning of

community psychology at the heart of the work of the EP, urging that psychological practice should be underpinned by values that seek to foster health, caring and compassion, human diversity and social justice, self-determination and participation (Prilleltensky & Nelson, 2000). This argument holds particular relevance given the expanded remit of the EP role to include working with young people in the 16-25 age group (Department for Education & Department of Health, 2016) and in the diversification of EP practice and working models in recent years (Lyonette et al., 2019). The community psychology lens similarly informed the focus of the literature review, described in the following section.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This review aimed to explore the existent research into young people's experiences of community psychology interventions. The review was carried out between October 2019 and March 2020. A single researcher was involved and a systematic approach was adopted to the search and the subsequent review (Aveyard, 2014).

2.2 Search Strategy

To ensure that the most relevant literature was included in the review, inclusion criteria and exclusion criteria were developed to determine the appropriateness of the studies found (see Table 1 below). Interventions aligned with a community psychology theory and value base were identified by reviewing the studies in light of the key principles of community psychology, which include prevention, empowerment and strength-based approaches, social justice, the adoption of an ecological rather than an individualistic perspective, and the promotion of diversity, sense of community, and active citizenship (Jason et al., 2019). In keeping with community psychology values, the review included interventions which worked with marginalised and underrepresented populations, supporting them to analyse their situations and take action, often at multiple levels, to promote wellness and create social change, rather than solely individual change (Nelson & Evans, 2014; Zimmerman & Eisman, 2017). The review included primary research studies that explored young people's (aged approximately 16-25) experiences of participating in community psychology interventions. Primary research involves the generation of new data to address a specific research question, as opposed to data collected from previously conducted studies (Jupp, 2006). Interventions were required to be community-based as school-based interventions have been studied elsewhere and they are not the focus of the current review. Similarly, studies looking exclusively at mentorship and positive youth development programmes were excluded as these operate according to a different theoretical

base. Furthermore, research that did not explore young people's experiences of participating in a community psychology intervention were excluded; for example, studies that described the intervention or outcome data, but did not gather participant experiences. In recognition that community psychology continues to evolve and expand as a field of study and practice (Bond et al., 2017; Wolff, 2014), studies published in and since 2000 were included in the current review.

Table 1

Literature Search Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
1. Papers written in English	Papers not written in English
2. Papers published in and since 2000	Papers published before 2000
3. Papers describing a primary research study	Papers not describing a primary research Study
4. Studies exploring interventions aligned with a community psychology theory and value base	Studies exploring interventions not aligned with a community psychology theory and value base
5. Studies exploring community-based interventions	Studies exploring interventions which were not community-based
6. Studies that explored young people's (aged approximately 16-25) experiences of participating in the intervention	Studies that did not explore young people's (aged approximately 16-25) experiences of participating in the intervention

Studies were retrieved from the following databases: *PsycINFO, PsycARTICLES, Psychology and Behavioral Sciences Collection, ERIC,* and *SocINDEX with Full Text*. An assortment of keywords was used to identify relevant literature by looking for search terms in article abstracts. Table 2 contains a list of the search terms used in the literature search.

Table 2

Collective Search Terms

Collective Search Name	Search Terms
Youth	'youth', 'adolescen*', 'young', 'teenage*'
Experience	'experience*', 'perception*', 'voice*', 'view*', 'perspective*'
Community psychology	'community psychology', 'youth-led', 'community-based', 'co-produc*', 'coproduc*', 'multi-level', 'multilevel', 'social justice', 'social-justice', 'empowerment', 'social action', 'social-action', 'community-led'
Intervention	'intervention', 'prevention', 'initiative', 'program*', 'project', 'organi*', 'mobili?ation'

An initial search of abstracts on the databases yielded 4813 results. When the date limiter was set to include more recent studies (from 2000 onwards), 4044 articles remained. Studies which were not in the English language were then excluded, leaving 3988 articles. Despite the plethora of articles identified through the database searches, most of these studies were excluded at screening for failing to possess a community psychology value base; many of these appeared due to the inclusion of the search term, 'community-based'. Similarly, a significant number of studies concentrated on outcome variables whereas there was a dearth of research into the quality of young people's experiences of the interventions. After initial screening, 137 full-text articles were assessed for eligibility, resulting in the exclusion of 110 articles; these are listed in Appendix A (Table A1) with reasons for their exclusion. One additional article was then added, located during a full-text reading of another article. Twenty-eight studies in total were identified as providing young people's experiences of community psychology interventions; please see Appendix B for the full list of titles. Of these, all provided qualitative data on youth participants' views and experiences of the interventions. A PRISMA

flow chart (Moher et al., 2009) can be found in Appendix C providing a visual representation of the article selection process.

A summary of findings from the literature is provided below, including a critique of the quality of relevant papers, facilitated through the employment of the CASP Qualitative Checklist (Critical Appraisal Skills Programme, 2019); questions and prompts from this appraisal tool helped to focus the researcher's critical analysis on relevant factors. A community psychology lens was adopted when exploring emergent themes across the literature, particularly in relation to study findings. The studies fell into two broad categories: community-based youth programmes and community-based participatory and action research programmes.

2.3 Results

2.3.1 Settings

Community-Based Youth Programmes.

Eighteen studies gathered participants' experiences of community-based youth programmes. Community-based youth programmes, within the community psychology domain, can include a variety of youth-led activities, such as youth organising and social action programmes, peer advocacy, youth leadership, and non-academic after-school programmes. The significant majority of these studies were conducted in the US (Atkinson, 2012; Beshers, 2007; Borden & Serido, 2009; Bulanda & McCrea, 2013; Davidson et al., 2010; Franzen et al., 2009; Hinnant, 2001; Kennedy et al., 2018; Kolano & Davila, 2019; Mosena et al., 2004; Nicholas et al., 2019; Richards-Schuster & Aldana, 2013; Schwartz & Suyemoto, 2013; Stanley, 2003; Ventura, 2017; Wernick et al., 2014). Just two studies were conducted elsewhere; one in Scotland (Miller et al., 2015) and one in England (Zlotowitz et al., 2016).

Three of the 18 studies focused on interventions intended to develop youth activism and civic engagement. Borden and Serido (2009) gathered experiential data from disadvantaged youths who were members of a youth-led empowerment programme promoting civic

responsibility whereas Schwartz and Suyemoto (2013) focused on the youth-led component of a community organisation created to address problems of unemployment, crime, economic disadvantage, and community tensions, in an urban, predominantly minority, neighbourhood. The intervention studied by Atkinson (2012) was also a youth development and movement-building programme but it differed somewhat to the other two studies as it was a liberatory education program, offering training and learning opportunities for individuals interested in social justice issues.

Four of the studies focused on the experiences of youths involved in community psychology interventions which aimed to support the empowerment and inclusion of racial and ethnic minority groups. The Kolano and Davila (2019) study gathered participant views of a community-based grassroots organisation serving newly arrived refugee and immigrant youths from Southeast Asia. Ventura (2017), meanwhile, focused on a youth-led, Latino community group, in a "predominantly White city" (p.27), whereas Bulanda and McCrea (2013) explored an adolescent leadership development programme for African-American youths residing in socio-economically disadvantaged communities. Conversely, Richards-Schuster and Aldana (2013) did not focus on one individual ethnic group; instead, they explored the Youth Dialogues on Race and Ethnicity Program, bringing together youths of African, Asian, European, Latino/a, and Middle Eastern descent in an urban region known to be highly segregated and increasingly diverse, to facilitate youth dialogue on issues of race, ethnicity, and social action, with the ultimate aim to create positive change in their communities.

Several studies focused on community psychology interventions with health-promoting objectives. The Hinnant (2001) study gathered experiential data from participants involved in programmes intended to reduce youth tobacco use. Nicholas et al. (2019), meanwhile, focused on the experiences of youth organisers who advocated for greater access to comprehensive sexual health education for teens in a region of the US which consistently reported some of the

highest rates of gonorrhoea and chlamydia in the country. Mosena et al. (2004) similarly gathered views on participation from youth peer advocates involved in a community-based programme striving to increase reproductive health knowledge and improve lifestyle choices among adolescent males in two inner-city communities known for disproportionately high rates of teenage pregnancy and contraction of sexually transmitted infections. Finally, Beshers (2007) explored perceptions of peer educators involved in a community-based programme to reduce teen pregnancy, which was set up in response to critically high rates of teen pregnancy in one region of New York State.

Mental health was another focus for interventions. Kennedy et al. (2018) gathered young people's experiences of participating in an arts-based social action group intended to reduce mental health stigma; the Youth Action Board also educated youth members about mental health issues and treatment, and it facilitated youth voice in the design of clinical mental health treatment programming. Zlotowitz et al. (2016), meanwhile, collected user's perceptions of a co-produced Music&Change intervention employed in an inner-city, high-density housing estate in the UK, in an area known to be deprived; the intervention centred on using contemporary music skills, such as DJ-ing and lyric writing, to foster relationships, address the mental health and related needs of youth participants, and reduce rates of offending. Franzen et al. (2009) also focused on an intervention targeting violence prevention in the community, the Youth Empowerment Solutions for Peaceful Communities programme; this initiative aimed to empower youths to identify conditions in their communities that contributed to youth violence, and participants were then supported to initiate community-level change by improving the physical environment of their neighbourhoods through intergenerational partnerships with community adult advocates.

Two studies concentrated on student-community partnerships. Davidson et al. (2010) gathered participant experiences from students involved in the Adolescent Diversion Project,

which was a community-based service-learning collaboration between a university and the local community, employing undergraduate students as advocates for court-involved youths. Stanley (2003) similarly looked at a partnership between a university and youths in the community; community psychology graduate students collaborated with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ) youths to create a social meeting venue.

Wernick et al. (2014) also explored an intervention supporting LGBTQ and allied youths; they gathered participant experiences of a community-based programme that used theatre within a transformative organising model to make schools safer and more inclusive.

Finally, Miller et al. (2015) explored community-led youth work projects aimed at re-engaging young people categorised as NEET (Not in Employment Education or Training) in one urban area and one rural area of Scotland, with both communities known to have very high levels of social deprivation based on national data; the two projects differed in the medium of engagement as the urban programme focused on media skills, music and arts, while the rural centre offered sports-related activities.

Community-Based Participatory and Action Research Projects.

Consistent with community psychology's emphasis on tackling societal problems by understanding individuals' relationships in broader contexts, community-based participatory and action research methods strive to incorporate individuals' knowledge and voices into comprehending and taking action to problems facing them and their communities (Levac et al., 2019; Teufel-Shone et al., 2006). Community members are valued as experts according to these research approaches, which emphasise the enhancement of local power, rejecting the role of the outside researcher as 'expert', and empowering the individuals who the research concerns to become agents rather than objects of the research (Cooper, 2005). These specific approaches to research, such as community-based participatory research (CBPR) and participatory action research (PAR), can enhance development by supporting youths to recognise and investigate

meaningful issues and to advocate for social change (Bruck, 2018). However, it should be noted that critics of participatory research approaches suggest that impacts have been assumed and the emancipative potential of these approaches has not yet been shown through adequately deconstructed accounts (Cook et al., 2017). Furthermore, Flicker (2008) cited the earlier work of Minkler (1980) in cautioning that care should be taken to ensure that the burden of organising and affecting change is not solely placed on the poor and marginalised of society; instead, the author advocated for collaborative decision-making and an appropriate level of participation shared between service providers and community members.

From the current literature search, 10 studies were identified which gathered youth experiences of various community-based participatory and action research programmes. Such programmes are referred to in the research community by many names including CBPR, PAR, youth research, youth-led research, and youth-led evaluation, and the terms can encompass a variety of activities such as research for advocacy, evaluation of services, and studies focused on youth voice (Gomez & Ryan, 2016; Jean & Marlene, 2004). More than half of the participatory research project studies identified in this review were conducted in the US (Bruck, 2018; Fisher-Borne & Brown, 2018; Gallerani et al., 2017; Gomez & Ryan, 2016; Kulbok et al., 2015; Weinronk et al., 2018). One study was completed in Canada (Flicker, 2008), and one each in the UK (Taggart et al., 2013), Lebanon (Makhoul et al., 2012), and Kenya (Cooper, 2005). Although it could be argued that studies conducted in Western countries such as Canada, the UK, and the US, could be generalisable to some extent, it might be more difficult to find commonalities with countries in the developing world such as Lebanon and Kenya, particularly as the youths involved in those studies were living under extreme social and economic conditions. Nevertheless, the conformity of the results of both studies with previous literature does suggest some degree of consistency across country and context.

Two of the studies identified through the current literature search used participatory

research approaches in the area of health. Flicker (2008) implemented a CBPR initiative to improve the conditions of young people living with HIV whereas Gallerani et al. (2017) explored young people's views on participating in a community-based environmental audit aimed at promoting community health and civic engagement.

A further two studies used PAR approaches to explore mental health. Taggart et al. (2013) implemented a PAR project with youths to investigate the impact of stigma on users of mental health services and Bruck (2018) used PAR with young people acting as co-researchers in a study exploring factors linked with youth mental health, such as perceived stress, coping strategies, and help-seeking behaviours.

Kulbok et al. (2015), meanwhile, conducted a CBPR project intended to develop strategies to prevent youth substance use.

Two studies explored the use of CBPR, both of which incorporated Photovoice, with ethnic and racial minority groups. Photovoice is a qualitative methodology that provides participants with the opportunity to portray salient community strengths and concerns through photography to facilitate critical dialogue about desired community change (Cubilla-Batista et al., 2017; Wang & Burris, 1997). Fisher-Borne and Brown (2018) assessed the value of Photovoice as a CBPR tool used to engage young Black men as researchers. Weinronk et al. (2018), meanwhile, evaluated the use of Photovoice, alongside other action-oriented CBPR methods including community interviews and digital storytelling, with rural Inupiat Alaska Native youths, in collaboration with university students from other states in the US.

Two studies reported on community-based research projects involving refugee youths. Makhoul et al. (2012) described the experiences of young people involved in a research project implemented in a Palestinian refugee camp in Beirut, Lebanon. Cooper (2005), meanwhile, used a PAR process with young people who had experienced education and discontinuity of education, based in a long-term refugee camp near Dadaab, Kenya.

Finally, one study explored the experiences of homeless young people utilising youth-led PAR (Gomez & Ryan, 2016).

2.3.2 Methodological Components

Participants.

In total, 584 youth participants were known to be involved in the 28 studies; one study failed to provide the number of participants involved (Mosena et al., 2004). Sample sizes ranged from four (Fisher-Borne & Brown, 2018) to 129 (Franzen et al., 2009). Of the 584 participants, 127 were known to be male, 183 female, two identified as transgender, and one chose not to disclose their gender. The participants' known ages ranged from 11 (Gallerani et al., 2017) to 30 (Stanley, 2003). Several studies failed to provide details regarding their participants' ages (Flicker, 2008; Kolano & Davila, 2019; Nicholas et al., 2019; Weinronk et al., 2018) and genders (Beshers, 2007; Bulanda & McCrea, 2013; Flicker, 2008; Franzen et al., 2009; Gomez & Ryan, 2016; Hinnant, 2001; Kennedy et al., 2018; Mosena et al., 2004; Weinronk et al., 2018). Some studies provided additional participant demographic information such as race/ethnicity (Atkinson, 2012; Borden & Serido, 2009; Bruck, 2018; Bulanda & McCrea, 2013; Davidson et al., 2010; Fisher-Borne & Brown, 2018; Franzen et al., 2009; Gallerani et al., 2017; Hinnant, 2001; Kennedy et al., 2018; Mosena et al., 2004; Nicholas et al., 2019; Richards-Schuster & Aldana 2013; Schwartz & Suyemoto, 2013; Stanley, 2003; Wernick et al., 2014; Zlotowitz et al., 2016), country of origin (Cooper, 2005; Kolano & Davila, 2019), sexual orientation (Atkinson, 2012; Fisher-Borne & Brown, 2018; Stanley, 2003; Wernick et al., 2014), socio-economic status (Atkinson, 2012; Davidson et al., 2010; Gallerani et al., 2017; Richards-Schuster & Aldana 2013) educational achievement (Cooper, 2005; Davidson et al., 2010; Fisher-Borne & Brown, 2018; Makhoul et al., 2012; Taggart et al., 2013) and work experience (Cooper, 2005; Davidson et al., 2010; Makhoul et al., 2012). Although the number of participants involved in the Fisher-Borne and Brown (2018) study was small, the additional

details provided by the authors regarding their participants showed some diversity in terms of socio-demographics within the sample. Flicker (2008), on the other hand, provided minimal information about their participants' characteristics, other than stating that almost all of the youths involved in the study identified as being current or past members of at least one socially excluded community, such as homeless, homosexual, or injection-drug-using.

Several studies had issues retaining youths for the duration of their research projects (Bruck, 2018; Gomez & Ryan, 2016; Kulbok et al., 2015; Weinronk et al., 2018) owing to conflicting obligations or in the case of Gomez and Ryan (2016), due to the transitory nature of homelessness which led to difficulty locating and interviewing all 16 of the youths who had originally started the project. Concerning Kulbok et al. (2015) in particular, just two of the 12 youths who acted as co-researchers in the study later completed interviews to share their experiences following programme participation; it is unlikely that the views portrayed by the two youths were representative of the wider participant group. Similarly, the self-selecting nature of participants in the Gallerani et al. (2017) study, who volunteered to participate in the project and subsequently in the follow-up focus groups, may be suggestive of a higher level of pre-existing interest and engagement which may not be representative of all youths in that age range. Flicker (2008), meanwhile, identified the potential for responder bias (Richman et al., 1999) in her study, given that the research participants were all members of the project working party, deeply invested in the group, and the research interviewer was known to the participants as she was also the research coordinator. However, it could be argued that interviewer familiarity can contribute to the quality of data collected, for instance, by reducing panel attrition, as well as promoting the development of trust, loyalty, emotional closeness, and interview rapport between respondents and interviewers, which in turn increases respondents' motivation to answer truthfully rather than in socially desirable ways (Kühne, 2018).

Eleven studies provided comprehensive information about their participant recruitment

strategy (Atkinson, 2012; Borden & Serido, 2009; Cooper, 2005; Fisher-Borne & Brown, 2018; Gallerani et al., 2017; Hinnant, 2001; Kennedy et al., 2018; Miller et al., 2015; Stanley, 2003; Weinronk et al., 2018; Zlotowitz et al., 2016). Two papers further outlined their process for preparing participants before their study commenced, and detailed techniques used to foster trust and rapport with the young people, and the wider community being researched (Borden & Serido, 2009; Cooper, 2005). Finally, three studies provided detailed descriptions of the settings where their research took place (Cooper, 2005; Makhoul et al., 2012; Ventura, 2017).

Concerning ethical considerations, 12 of the studies confirmed that ethical approval had been granted by a research ethics committee (Atkinson, 2012; Borden & Serido, 2009; Bruck, 2018; Fisher-Borne & Brown, 2018; Flicker, 2008; Gallerani et al., 2017; Hinnant, 2001; Kennedy et al., 2018; Makhoul et al., 2012; Nicholas et al., 2019; Taggart at al., 2013; Wernick et al., 2014) and 11 studies outlined their methods for securing informed consent from participants (Atkinson, 2012; Beshers, 2007; Fisher-Borne & Brown, 2018; Gallerani et al., 2017; Gomez & Ryan, 2016; Hinnant, 2001; Kennedy et al., 2018; Makhoul et al., 2012; Schwartz & Suyemoto, 2013; Stanley, 2003; Wernick et al., 2014). Five studies also confirmed that consent for youth participation was obtained from parents/guardians (Atkinson, 2012; Beshers, 2007; Gallerani et al., 2017; Hinnant, 2001; Schwartz & Suyemoto, 2013).

Research Designs.

All 28 of the studies adopted qualitative research designs to obtain insider views of the experiences of young people involved in the various community psychology interventions. None of the studies detailed their ontological stance, however, and only three studies outlined their epistemological positioning. Taggart et al. (2013) adopted a constructivist position to the meaning of the experiences reported, recognising the co-construction of meaning between the interviewer and the young participants that occurred during the interview process. Ventura (2017), meanwhile, explicitly recognised her participants of colour as creators and holders of

knowledge, in line with critical race-gendered epistemologies (Delgado Bernal, 2002) whereas Atkinson (2012) held an eclectic worldview, mingling feminist, anti-oppressive, critical and social constructivist paradigms, with the researcher and participants co-constructing a subjectivist and relativist interpretation of the intervention (Annells, 1997).

Nine studies employed case study research designs to explore youth experiences (Beshers, 2007; Cooper, 2005; Fisher-Borne & Brown, 2018; Flicker, 2008; Franzen et al., 2009; Kennedy et al., 2018; Kolano & Davila, 2019; Richards-Schuster & Aldana, 2013; Stanley, 2003). In keeping with case study research methodologies, five of those studies used more than one mode of data collection to gather youth participant views (Beshers, 2007; Flicker, 2008; Franzen et al., 2009; Kolano & Davila, 2019; Richards-Schuster & Aldana, 2013). Some of the studies also gathered perspectives from other key stakeholders such as community advisers (Richards-Schuster & Aldana, 2013), academic researcher-clinicians and service providers (Flicker, 2008); however, their responses are not relevant to the current literature review. Gathering youth participant experiences was not the sole focus of the Fisher-Borne and Brown (2018) case study either; they primarily employed the Photovoice CBPR method to explore how intersections of gender, sexuality, and race, affect the lives and health of young gay and bisexual Black men, to inform the development of appropriate HIV intervention programmes for this cohort. Although not subjected to a rigorous analysis, the authors did gather reflections from participants regarding their experiences of using the Photovoice method at the end of the study.

Other studies also triangulated data by using multiple modes of data collection. Four studies gathered participant perspectives from interview and focus group data (Atkinson, 2012; Bruck, 2018; Schwartz & Suyemoto, 2013; Wernick et al., 2014) whereas other studies used field notes (Ventura, 2017; Zlotowitz et al., 2016) and written responses from participants (Bulanda & McCrea, 2013), alongside interview data. A further three studies conducted

multiple interviews with young people to gather thick descriptions of their individual experiences (Nicholas et al., 2019; Miller et al., 2015; Mosena et al., 2004). Weinronk et al. (2018) employed a particularly strong research design to answer the current literature review question. They conducted several individual interviews with Inupiat youth co-researchers during and after their research project to gather their reflections, along with a focus group interview with some of these youths 12 months after the project ended. Weinronk et al. (2018) also gathered perspectives from university student co-researchers involved in the same study, through written papers synthesising their experiences, along with two follow-up focus group interviews to reflect upon their experiences after the research project had finished. Conversely, nine studies obtained young people's views through a single administration of focus group interviews (Borden & Serido, 2009; Gallerani et al., 2017; Hinnant, 2001), written exercises (Cooper, 2005) or individual interviews (Davidson et al., 2010; Gomez & Ryan, 2016; Kulbok et al., 2015; Makhoul et al., 2012; Stanley, 2003) which provided varying levels of depth. In particular, participants in the Cooper (2005) case study were asked to provide written anonymous responses to a closed question with a narrow focus which provided limited scope for analysis (i.e., *Have you gained anything from this research project that will help you in your future?)* Nevertheless, the youths' responses are an addition to the literature and their themes are included in the findings section below.

Data Analysis.

Data from five studies was subjected to thematic analysis (Franzen et al., 2009; Hinnant, 2001; Miller et al., 2015; Schwartz & Suyemoto, 2013; Zlotowitz et al., 2016) whereas three studies (Kennedy et al., 2018; Kolano & Davila, 2019; Ventura, 2017) adhered to coding methods as outlined by Saldaña (2013; 2016). Four studies (Flicker, 2008; Makhoul et al., 2012; Nicholas et al., 2019; Wernick et al., 2014) employed tools from Grounded Theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) in their data analysis whereas the Atkinson (2012) study, whilst also guided by

the general principles of Grounded Theory (Corbin & Strauss, 1990), was more closely aligned with Auerbach and Silverstein's (2003) hybrid model of coding and theory building procedures. Taggart et al. (2013) and Weinronk et al. (2018), meanwhile, subscribed to the Grounded Theory methodology espoused by Charmaz (2006). Borden and Serido (2009) used a phenomenological method of data analysis (Colaizzi, 1978) whereas Bulanda and McCrea (2013) were guided in their analysis by criteria described by Williams (1986, as cited in Shaw (1999, pp. 14–15)) for naturalistic, qualitative programme evaluations. Richards-Schuster and Aldana (2013), meanwhile, ensured that their selection of coding categories was verified by participative and referential strategies (Costas, 1992). Furthermore, data from the Gallerani et al. (2017) study was analysed through qualitative content analysis with an inductive approach (Cho & Lee, 2014) whereas Gomez and Ryan (2016) analysed their interview data using content analytic procedures established by Miles and Huberman (1994). Three studies explicitly outlined their steps to analyse their data but they did not subscribe to a specific methodology (Beshers, 2007; Davidson et al., 2010; Stanley, 2003). Five studies, on the other hand, failed to detail any method of data analysis used to explore participant experiences of their respective interventions (Bruck, 2018; Cooper, 2005; Fisher-Borne & Brown, 2018; Kulbok et al., 2015; Mosena et al., 2004).

Trustworthiness of the Data.

It follows that research articles also varied broadly in terms of rigour and credibility of the data. Taggart et al. (2013) explicitly set out the steps they took to ensure rigour and trustworthiness at each stage of the research process, ensuring methodological rigour through immersion in the data, and cross-checking analysis at each stage with each author involved in the study. Cross verification for congruence between researchers was also employed in other studies when exploring codes and recurrent themes emerging from the data (Borden & Serido, 2009; Davidson et al., 2010; Fisher-Borne & Brown, 2018; Gallerani et al., 2017; Gomez &

Ryan, 2016; Makhoul et al., 2012; Wernick et al., 2014; Zlotowitz et al., 2016) although only two studies provided information on their frequency of interrater reliability, which ranged from 88-91% (Bulanda & McCrea, 2013) to approximately 93% (Richards-Schuster & Aldana, 2013). The credibility of research findings was also improved by incorporating members of the community into the research process as much as possible (Cooper, 2005). Member checking was incorporated in some studies throughout data collection and analysis (Atkinson, 2012; Kennedy et al., 2018; Nicholas et al., 2019; Richards-Schuster & Aldana, 2013; Ventura, 2017; Wernick et al., 2014) and before the publication of research findings (Flicker, 2008; Schwartz & Suyemoto, 2013). Other strategies employed to optimise the trustworthiness of research included triangulation of data collection methods (Atkinson, 2012; Beshers, 2007; Bulanda & McCrea, 2013; Flicker, 2008; Franzen et al., 2009; Kolano & Davila, 2019; Richards-Schuster & Aldana, 2013; Schwartz & Suyemoto, 2013; Ventura, 2017; Weinronk et al., 2018; Wernick et al., 2014; Zlotowitz et al., 2016), providing thick description (Atkinson, 2012; Flicker, 2008; Kolano & Davila, 2019; Miller et al., 2015; Mosena et al., 2004; Nicholas et al., 2019), and retaining an explicit audit trail (Atkinson, 2012; Flicker, 2008). Field notes were retained by some studies (Atkinson, 2012; Bulanda & McCrea, 2013; Fisher-Borne & Brown, 2018; Kolano & Davila, 2019; Ventura, 2017; Zlotowitz et al., 2016) and memos were used by Richards-Schuster and Aldana (2013) and Taggart et al. (2013) to detail decisions made about coding and theme development during data analysis. Transcribing interviews also facilitates methodological rigour as these can be reviewed by researchers and compared to audio-recordings of the original interviews. Seventeen of the studies confirmed that their individual and focus group interviews were audiotaped and transcribed (Atkinson, 2012; Beshers, 2007; Borden & Serido, 2009; Flicker, 2008; Fisher-Borne & Brown, 2018; Franzen et al., 2009; Gallerani et al., 2017; Gomez & Ryan, 2016; Hinnant, 2001; Kennedy et al., 2018; Kolano & Davila, 2019; Makhoul et al., 2012; Nicholas et al., 2019; Schwartz & Suyemoto, 2013; Stanley,

2003; Taggart at el., 2013; Wernick et al., 2014). Furthermore, Gallerani et al. (2017) assured the validity and reliability of themes through theme saturation, using independent coders, and quantifying the emergence of each theme across each participant category. In contrast to the above efforts, four studies provided minimal information about their techniques to establish rigour or trustworthiness of their data (Bruck, 2018; Kulbok et al., 2015; Miller et al. 2015; Mosena et al., 2004). Therefore, their findings should be interpreted with a degree of caution.

Reflexivity relates to the researcher's reflections on their interaction with the research process, intended to increase validity and to ensure that results reflect the participants' own experiences, as opposed to the researcher's prior or emerging assumptions (Finlay, 2002). To maintain reflexivity, three studies employed reflexive journaling (Atkinson, 2012; Schwartz & Suyemoto, 2013; Taggart et al., 2013) to record thought processes and to uncover assumptions. Some studies reflected on the impact of the personal backgrounds of the researchers, positioning them in terms of their ethnicity and professional roles (Atkinson, 2012; Fisher-Borne & Brown, 2018) with Kolano and Davila (2019, p.126) acknowledging, "We each drew on our identities and experiences as we analysed the data, and the findings … are reflected through this lens". Atkinson (2012) specifically considered her privilege as a white adult woman, reflecting on the impact of her 'social location' on the research, and attending to age, racial, and power disparities between herself, the youth researchers, and the informants. Taggart et al. (2013) similarly reflected on ethical issues related to power relations and the potential for the researcher to take on an expert role, whether implicitly or explicitly, during the research process; according to the authors, care was taken to remain cognisant of the impact that this could have upon the processes of interviewing and co-constructing meaning in their study.

2.3.3 Findings

Motivators for Involvement.

Youths in eight of the studies received financial reimbursement for involvement in their

projects (Atkinson, 2012; Bulanda & McCrea, 2013; Flicker, 2008; Gallerani et al., 2017; Gomez & Ryan, 2016; Hinnant, 2001; Makhoul et al., 2012; Schwartz & Suyemoto, 2013) and participants in the Franzen et al. (2009) study were incentivised with recreational opportunities and gift certificates. However, only the participants in the Schwartz and Suyemoto (2013) study reported that payment was a major incentive for joining the programme, and over time, these participants also became intrinsically motivated to participate, consistent with research on processes of motivation in youth (Dawes & Larson, 2011).

In corroboration with further literature on motivators for youth engagement (Harré, 2007), the social injustices personally experienced by youth researchers in the Makhoul et al. (2012) study led to their engagement to affect change for other community members. Similarly, youths in the Wernick et al. (2014) study related their programme participation to their own experiences of oppression, isolation and powerlessness. Young people involved in other projects were motivated to get involved by their desire to make a difference, and by their understanding that their actions could have a positive impact on others (Hinnant, 2001; Kolano & Davila, 2019; Taggart et al., 2013; Schwartz & Suyemoto, 2013). Some young people also reported motivation for further action after project completion (Gallerani et al., 2017; Weinronk et al., 2018; Wernick et al., 2014), attributing participation with sparking their desire to continue helping others, including those who had experienced similar challenges to themselves (Bulanda & McCrea, 2013; Gomez & Ryan, 2016).

For some marginalised youth participants, having a safe space to retreat to was an initial motivation for entering their programme, as well as an important piece of their development through the process of programme involvement (Beshers, 2007; Borden & Serido, 2009; Bulanda & McCrea, 2013; Hinnant, 2001; Kennedy et al., 2018; Nicholas et al., 2019; Ventura, 2017; Zlotowitz et al., 2016).

Furthermore, youths attributed the fun, social, or relaxed group atmosphere, with their

continued involvement in community programmes (Beshers, 2007; Hinnant, 2001; Kolano & Davila, 2019).

Empowerment.

The goal of empowerment is one of the most commonly cited reasons for using youth-led community psychology interventions, and youth participatory research approaches in particular (Chambers, 1997; Cooper, 2005; Nelson & Wright, 1995). In the reviewed literature, youth participants described experiences of individual empowerment through, for example, developments in self-confidence and courage to advocate for themselves in their daily lives (Wernick et al., 2014) and programme activities which granted them opportunities to understand their ethnic histories and further develop their identities (Kolano & Davila, 2019). Youth researchers perceived that their contribution to projects mattered; they felt that they had a voice and were listened to by others, including policymakers, and they believed that their project experiences provided them with skills necessary for future advocacy work (Flicker, 2008; Gomez & Ryan, 2016). Youth participants in the Cooper (2005) PAR study expressed their pride in having people 'in power' listen to them and offer respect for their research efforts, which led to the securement of commitments of new resources and support from many organisations; however, this was reported anecdotally by the author and no direct quotations were provided from the participants themselves. Nevertheless, previous studies have similarly found that PAR projects with youths affected by conflict "helped young people overcome feelings of social dislocation and build self-esteem, self-reliance and a new sense of identity that allowed them to heal and even thrive" (Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, 2005, p.3).

Empowering processes can have additional outcomes for individuals including improvements in functioning and psychological well-being (Zimmerman, 1995). Consistent with psychological empowerment theory (Zimmerman, 1990), youths were found to have an

increased sense of personal agency, improved decision-making capacity, and enhanced experience of autonomy, stemming from their experiences of successfully completing important tasks and taking on valued roles during research projects (Taggart et al., 2013) and other community psychology interventions (Kennedy et al., 2018). Youths attributed their intervention involvement with improved self-confidence, emotional stability (Atkinson, 2012; Beshers, 2007; Flicker, 2008; Kennedy et al., 2018; Makhoul et al., 2012; Miller et al., 2015; Taggart et al., 2013; Wernick et al., 2014), empathy (Bulanda & McCrea, 2013; Gomez & Ryan, 2016; Kolano & Davila, 2019), and overall personal growth (Beshers, 2007; Kolano & Davila, 2019). They described positive changes in self-image (Ventura; 2017; Zlotowitz et al., 2016), perceiving that peers and adults treated them with greater respect as a result of their involvement in their respective programmes (Bulanda & McCrea, 2013; Flicker, 2008; Schwartz & Suyemoto, 2013); such findings are consistent with research on adolescent identity development (Ragelienė, 2016). Qualitative descriptions provided by youths in the Schwartz and Suyemoto (2013) study similarly supported changes in self-concept, self- esteem, and civic responsibility; the authors suggested that the opportunity to be viewed as positive, contributing members of society may be particularly beneficial for youths from minority and disadvantaged communities where negative stereotypes can proliferate, arguing that recognition as role models by others, especially adults with power, may be particularly influential on how these young people view themselves. However, Flicker (2008, p.83) warned of the "double-edged sword" of empowerment, citing an example of one research participant whose empowered attempt to foster community resources without adequate consultation with others led to project partner dissatisfaction and to his ostracisation from project activities. Wang et al. (1998, p. 85) similarly cautioned that "participants who are motivated to become actors for change may feel a sense of cynicism, despair or powerlessness when the results of their efforts fail to match their expectations".

Adaptive Functioning.

Youths involved in the various programmes also perceived many adaptive benefits accruing from their participation. These included advancements in communication and social interaction skills (Bruck, 2018; Cooper, 2005; Hinnant, 2001; Kolano & Davila, 2019; Makhoul et al., 2012; Nicholas et al., 2019; Richards-Schuster & Aldana, 2013; Wernick et al., 2014), accrual of mental health (Kennedy et al., 2018) and sexual health knowledge (Nicholas et al., 2019), development of skills in leadership (Bulanda & McCrea, 2013; Kennedy et al., 2018; Kolano & Davila, 2019; Kulbok et al., 2015; Nicholas et al., 2019; Richards-Schuster & Aldana, 2013; Ventura; 2017; Weinronk et al., 2018; Wernick et al., 2014), project planning and implementation (Atkinson, 2012; Stanley, 2003), and the fostering of group working, team building, and research skills (Atkinson, 2012; Bruck, 2018; Cooper, 2005; Kulbok et al., 2015; Weinronk et al., 2018; Zlotowitz et al., 2016). According to participants in the Schwartz and Suyemoto (2013) study, they were able to transfer competencies developed through programme involvement into other areas of their lives, including school where they self-reported greater accountability, increased participation, and improved relationships with teachers. Participants in other studies also felt that many of their newly developed skills would help to prepare them for college and future careers (Bruck, 2018; Nicholas et al., 2019).

Employment and Career Impacts.

Participants in at least five studies acquired paid employment as a result of the skills and confidence developed through programme involvement (Cooper, 2005; Miller et al., 2015; Nicholas et al., 2019; Stanley, 2003; Zlotowitz et al., 2016). Similarly, youths in other studies re-evaluated their plans for the future following project participation (Davidson et al., 2010; Flicker, 2008; Makhoul et al., 2012; Nicholas et al., 2019; Weinronk et al., 2018; Wernick et al., 2014), with some young people attributing participation with their desire to pursue socially-oriented careers in human justice, social science, and community organising (Bruck, 2018;

Davidson et al., 2010; Nicholas et al., 2019; Stanley, 2003). This demonstrates the transformational potential of youth-led social change projects in laying foundations for life-long social justice engagement.

Social Capital.

Five studies portrayed gains in participants' social capital as a result of their programme involvement (Kolano & Davila, 2019; Miller et al. 2015; Nicholas et al., 2019; Schwartz & Suyemoto, 2013; Ventura, 2017), with community change efforts contributing to positive change at the individual and community levels. Relationships created through programme involvement in the Nicholas et al. (2019) study led to the development of valuable human capital (Souto-Otero, 2016) for participants building new academic and professional networks, registering for courses, and seeking employment opportunities, whereas youth in the Kolano and Davila (2019) study were shown to develop critical social capital (Ginwright, 2007) and activist identities through the acquisition of pride in their ethno-racial cultural heritages, self-empowerment through knowledge-building activities, and awareness of shared struggles with other marginalised groups. Finally, in the Ventura (2017) study, youths were found to collectively grow their community cultural wealth (Yosso, 2005) through the creation of strong relationships from which to draw social, familial, and navigational capital; older youths helped younger youths with homework, scholarship applications, and college applications, whereas younger youths looked up to their older community allies as successful role models.

A Shift in Lens From Individual to Community Level Changes.

Through project participation, youths developed an increased awareness of their community's strengths, needs, and available resources (Gallerani et al., 2017; Kulbok et al., 2015; Weinronk et al., 2018) and they displayed a greater commitment to creating change in their communities and to eradicating social injustices (Atkinson, 2012; Gallerani et al., 2017; Richards-Schuster & Aldana, 2013). Group discussions enabled youths to view issues as

systemic, rather than individualised to their own experiences (Ventura, 2017) and participants believed that they could have an impact on their larger communities by grouping in collective empowerment with other programme members to remedy community problems (Bulanda & McCrea, 2013; Hinnant, 2001; Wernick et al., 2014).

There is growing evidence suggesting that actively involving youths in critical examinations of their communities to affect social change can strengthen youth identities as members of their communities, as well as expanding problem-solving and critical-thinking skills (Suleiman et al., 2006). To this end, six studies relayed participant accounts attributing programme participation with the acquisition of critical thinking skills and development of critical consciousness (Freire, 2000; Ginwright & Cammarota, 2002), enabling them to question structural systems of power and to begin to unpack the root causes and historical trends of social injustices (Atkinson, 2012; Kolano & Davila, 2019; Nicholas et al., 2019; Richards-Schuster & Aldana 2013; Ventura, 2017; Wernick et al., 2014).

Young people perceived important shifts in themselves as a result of their participation, including changes in oppressive attitudes and behaviours (Atkinson, 2012; Davidson et al., 2010). They felt more open-minded following programme involvement and they viewed themselves as change agents (Beshers, 2007), reporting increased confidence to intervene when others made statements that could foster negative attitudes or beliefs (Beshers, 2007; Borden & Serido, 2009; Kennedy et al., 2018). Many progressed to becoming engaged in social action (Atkinson, 2012; Kennedy et al., 2018; Schwartz & Suyemoto, 2013), witnessing concrete changes at individual, community, and policy levels, as a result of their efforts (Hinnant, 2001; Kolano & Davila, 2019; Nicholas et al., 2019; Wernick et al., 2014). Of significance, participants also attributed programme participation with instilling in them a sense of hope and determination to continue working towards change (Atkinson, 2012; Miller et al., 2015; Wernick et al., 2014).

Sense of Community and Social Bonds.

Consistent with previous research (Harré, 2007), the enhanced sense of community and social bonds formed through participation in the various community-based programmes was another key aspect of the continued commitment of youth participants; there was a sense of solidarity with other members (Flicker, 2008; Hinnant, 2001; Kennedy et al., 2018; Taggart et al., 2013) and in some cases, relationships and connections continued beyond completion of the project (Weinronk et al., 2018). Young people developed connections through shared and similar experiences of marginalisation (Borden & Serido, 2009; Bulanda & McCrea, 2013; Ventura, 2017; Wernick et al., 2014). They valued meeting a community of like-minded peers (Hinnant, 2001; Nicholas et al., 2019) and they perceived the group environment to be a safe space where they could talk openly without fear of criticism and judgment (Beshers, 2007; Hinnant, 2001; Kennedy et al., 2018). Some participants also valued having space where they could interact and develop friendships with young people from different racial and ethnic backgrounds (Richards-Schuster & Aldana, 2013). Furthermore, they appreciated having other group members to work as a team to meet shared goals and they believed that their collective voice was much stronger and more effective than if they were acting alone (Hinnant, 2001).

Relationships With Adults.

The importance of approaches adopted by adults involved in community psychology interventions emerged as another theme from the literature. For example, young people in the Kennedy et al. (2018) study valued adults who viewed themselves as partners and allies to youths, sharing power and creating an egalitarian space, whereas young people in the Zlotowitz et al. (2016) study stressed the importance of adult practitioners who were trustworthy, non-judgmental, and genuinely cared. Youths in the Miller et al. (2015) study felt empowered as a result of their relationships with adult staff, explaining that adult youth workers helped them to build bridging capital and opened possibilities in their minds, in contrast with negative

relationships many of these young people had experienced with other authority figures, such as teachers and police officers, who they felt treated unfairly by. Strong bonds created as a result of caring and trusted relationships between youths and adult allies (Ventura, 2017) led to more positive personal outcomes for the young participants as they were able to seek care from these adults to help with psychosocial needs (Bulanda & McCrea, 2013; Zlotowitz et al., 2016). Conversely, youth participants in the Franzen et al. (2009) study indicated need for improvement in some of their youth-adult relationships, particularly criticising some adults who tended to be authoritarian and critical rather than youth-led in their approaches, with many participants perceiving that they were not being listened to.

Degree of Youth Involvement.

The community psychology programmes varied in terms of the degree of leadership granted to youth participants. As indicated above, participants in the Franzen et al. (2009) study lamented the approaches adopted by some programme staff, feeling intimidated by some adults and perceiving that their ideas were not valued or acted upon. Conversely, youths in the Bulanda and McCrea (2013) study fully participated in the design of their community services which the authors suggested contributed to the significantly high participation rate in the programme; the young people identified community problems to focus on, and they actively planned programme goals and activities to address those problems. Youth participants in the Hinnant (2001) study similarly reported that they immersed themselves in their project because they felt that they were able to make decisions to determine the direction and activities of the group. Zlotowitz et al. (2016) also found that their youth participants responded best when activities were youth-led; the young people were keen to gain experience and they valued having roles, allowing them to feel more ownership and to gain self-efficacy, which the authors hypothesised could prevent future antisocial behaviour. Youth participants in the Nicholas et al. (2019) study similarly assumed leadership roles in meetings and political activities, where they facilitated

discussions and organised events; adults then supported the young people in managing uncomfortable conversations by promoting self-awareness, and they provided choices on how and when teens participated.

The community-based participatory and action research studies presented in this review also varied according to the degree of involvement and leadership granted to youth participants. For instance, results in the Flicker (2008) study were not predominantly gathered or analysed using a participatory framework; perhaps not unrelated, youth participants in the same study lamented a perceived lack of attention they received from some project partners, complaining of a divide between young project members and the researcher-academics, with some questioning the rhetoric of 'partnership' and describing a "power dynamic" at play (p.81). In contrast, youths were involved in each phase of the research reported by other studies (Bruck, 2018; Cooper, 2005; Gomez & Ryan, 2016; Kulbok et al., 2015; Taggart et al., 2013; Weinronk et al., 2018), including dissemination of the research findings (Bruck, 2018; Cooper, 2005; Taggart et al. 2013). Participants involved in research which incorporated youth involvement throughout, reported a sense of pride and ownership over the study, describing areas of personal growth, and belief that their voices were heard, decision-making was shared, and a balance of power prevailed throughout (Bruck, 2018). By having young people lead the research, projects were able to engage high-risk youths as study participants, facilitating them to open up about challenges that they might have been hesitant to share with more traditional researchers (Gomez & Ryan, 2016; Makhoul et al., 2012).

At the same time, risk exists when youths lead a research project when the researchers' experiences are very similar to the study participants' and therefore researcher bias could be allowed to infiltrate findings. To avoid this problem arising, projects could avoid using peer researchers as data analysts, but instead use them to help elicit open and honest responses from study participants, and then ensure that their voice is reflected through member checking

(Gomez et al., 2015).

Challenges Encountered.

Participation in community psychology interventions is not without potential risk and negative impact. For instance, one participant in the Nicholas et al. (2019) study was not granted a leadership opportunity at her school due to her involvement in publicity for the programme's teen dating violence play. Youth performers in the Wernick et al. (2014) study were required to claim their identities as LGBTQ, becoming openly vulnerable about their experiences of marginalisation, and they had to demand change from adult decision-makers in their schools and communities, whereas participation in the Flicker (2008) study was felt to contribute to some risks for youths regarding disclosure and the stigma of being actively involved in an HIV activity. Similarly, in the Taggart et al. (2013) study, the emotional salience of the PAR project topic and the realisation of the degree of stigma in mental health had an impact on the participants who were mental health service users; in this respect, there is an inherent risk involved in the PAR process as participants can discover the enormity of the problems facing them, as well as the limits to a project's capacity to affect necessary changes. Additionally, not all of the participatory research projects involved an 'action'; the Fisher-Borne and Brown (2018) study was solely exploratory, which participants subsequently identified as posing a risk of problem identification, for potentially re-victimising and disempowering individuals already identified as marginalised. It is suggested that research strategies should link the process of empowerment to "tangible outcomes that achieve tangible results" (Boehm & Staples, 2002, p. 452). Furthermore, Gomez and Ryan (2016, p.192) cautioned that "having a 'voice' does not always lead to change"; participants might feel empowered to make a difference and while they may be able to share their ideas and recommendations to an audience that holds power to make changes (e.g., policymakers), that does not mean that their recommendations will be considered and acted upon.

Safety concerns also limited some programme political activity and youths became frustrated with individuals with political power, such as legislators who were unreceptive to lobbying (Nicholas et al., 2019). Young people in the Zlotowitz et al. (2016) study described a sense of hopelessness and reduced motivation when they felt that they had changed but the community and agencies around them had not. Other youth participants experienced a challenge in being viewed as role models for others (Beshers, 2007). Finally, although community-based projects can be deeply rewarding, such work often requires long-term relationships, resource investment, and a lot of time, care, and commitment on the part of everyone involved (Flicker, 2008; Weinronk et al., 2018).

2.4 Conclusions

This review set out to evaluate the research literature gathering youth participant experiences of community psychology interventions. Twenty-eight studies were identified in total, broadly distinguished between studies exploring community youth programmes and community-based participatory and action research projects. Research designs varied widely in terms of methodological rigour and credibility.

The vast majority of the participants valued their participation in the various programmes, with youth leadership and co-production found to be integral to programme success. Despite the risks and challenges described, the overarching consensus from participants was that their experiences were positive, enjoyable, and empowering, and they appreciated the opportunity to reflect and take action on social issues of importance to their communities. The results suggested that youth civic engagement and participation can lead to positive outcomes in terms of developing individuals' psychological well-being, adaptive functioning, and social capital. Although there was tentative evidence to suggest sustainability of outcomes (Flicker, 2008; Kennedy et al., 2018), future research endeavours need to explore whether benefits and changes in targeted social inequalities are maintained over time.

Furthermore, all of the data was qualitative, situated within a specific time and place; therefore, these studies cannot offer generalisable findings about the population of youth at large. Nevertheless, through offering details about specific programmes and organisational contexts, comparisons can be made with other samples and transferability can be assessed to other settings.

2.5 Rationale for the Current Study

This review identified several gaps in the research literature. Previous studies predominantly took place in the US; just three studies were conducted in the UK. Identified studies offered limited insight into young people's understanding of their own lived experiences (retrospectively, and their prospective experiences) of community psychology interventions. Furthermore, there was minimal exploration of youths' experiences of managing difficulties encountered through the course of their work with community-based programmes, along with a lack of depth in the attention paid to the meaning that participants ascribed to their involvement, including shifts in internalised representations of themselves and their communities. Although the reviewed studies used qualitative research designs, none used the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) approach, a key assumption of which is the exploration of lived experiences. Finally, how these youths conceptualise their selves, lives, and their communities, has not been adequately explored in the literature, and it is suggested that deeper exploration of their holistic lived experiences could help further understanding of the phenomenological experience, and ultimately better inform professional understanding.

The paucity of research on the experiences of youths engaged in community psychology interventions in socially disadvantaged areas of the UK supports the value of the current study in further understanding how these young people perceive and express their lived experiences. The intention is to add to the literature by giving them a space to be heard and to share their views in a manner that is exploratory in ethos.

3. **METHODOLOGY**

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter provided an argument for the need for research into young people's experiences of participating in community psychology interventions in the UK context. This chapter will describe in detail how this research was conducted in the current study. The research question will be specified and justification will be given for the exploratory, qualitative nature of the study. An argument will be made for particular ontology and epistemology and information will be provided regarding the theoretical underpinning of the approach applied. The research design will be described, including details about the research participants, interview method, and how the interview data was analysed. Finally, attention will be given to ethical considerations and factors affecting validity and reliability.

3.2 Research Question

This study aims to address the following research question:

What are the experiences of young people involved in a community psychology intervention?

3.3 Purpose of the Research

The United Nations (1989) Convention on the Rights of the Child states the entitlement for children and young people to express their views (Article 13), and to have their opinions taken into consideration (Article 12). It could be argued that this research provides an opportunity to implement the above convention as the primary aim of this study is to explore the conceptualisations and lived experiences of young people who have taken up roles in a youth-led organisation in their community. The research is exploratory because the topic has yet to be explored in this specific context. The research also strives towards an emancipatory purpose because it focuses on giving these young people a voice and there will be shared decision-making with the participants regarding the processes for disseminating the research findings.

3.4 Research Orientation

The ‘what’ and ‘how’ questions of research are affected by one’s philosophical positioning (Smith et al., 2009). This section considers the status of the knowledge that is being sought to address the research question, which is the ontological position of the research. A description will also be provided of the epistemology used to uncover that knowledge, consisting of experiences and interpretations. Finally, details will be provided about the theoretical lens used to view the information, which in this case will be phenomenology.

3.4.1 Ontology

Research is shaped by the researcher’s underlying worldview, understood to be “a basic set of beliefs that guide action” (Guba, 1990, p. 17). Ontology refers to these guiding assumptions about the form and nature of being and reality (Guba & Lincoln, 1994), which exist along a continuum from absolute relativism to absolute realism (Willig, 2008). This study adopted a relativist ontological position, which holds that reality is subjective and individually constructed, thereby differing from one individual to another (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Scotland, 2012). Meanings are constructed by people as they engage with the world that they inhabit (Crotty, 1998) and interpretations are based upon individual experiences (Creswell, 2014). In contrast to relativism, the realist view is that the world consists of structures and objects that have cause-and-effect relationships with one another (Willig, 2008) and “that entities exist independently of being perceived, or independently of our theories about them” (Phillips, 1987, p. 205).

Based on the view that individuals construct reality by interpreting their experiences, this study explored young people’s involvement with a youth-led community programme; it was assumed that the youths would each have their own construction of reality, based upon their perceptions of what that reality is.

3.4.2 Epistemology

Epistemology is concerned with the nature of the relationship between the knower and what can be known, attempting to address the questions of how and what can be known (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). It is a branch of philosophy focused on the theory of knowledge; during study design, researchers are encouraged to consider the nature of knowledge, its scope, along with the validity and reliability of claims to knowledge (Willig, 2008).

This study adopted a constructivist epistemological paradigm, an approach founded on the work of Berger and Luckmann (1966) and Lincoln and Guba (1985). In contrast to the objectivist epistemological stance which is rooted in the realist ontological position, constructivist research is relativist and subjectivist, emphasising the diversity of interpretations and asserting that "there is no objective truth to be known" (Hugly & Sayward, 1987, p.278). According to constructivism, people construct meanings as they engage with their world and they make sense of it based on their cultural and historical perspectives (Crotty, 1998). Generation of meaning is fundamentally socially constructed, formed through interaction with others (Creswell, 2014). As a result, accounts are varied and multiple, and people can construct contradictory yet equally valid meanings about the same phenomenon (Gray, 2013).

Constructivism is aligned with a naturalistic orientation to inquiry (Hunt, 2009); researchers attempt to interpret phenomena in their natural settings, in terms of understanding the meanings that people bring to them (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). It follows that knowledge is developed through a process that respects differences between people and the objects of natural sciences, and the researcher is required to grasp the subjective meaning of social action (Bryman, as cited in Grix, 2004).

The constructivist paradigm is not without critics, however. The strongest criticism of constructivism is that it neglects to address the ideological and political influences on knowledge and social reality (Mack, 2010); the constructivist researcher seeks to understand

social phenomena, but critics suggest that the paradigm does not go far enough in advocating for an action agenda to help marginalised groups (Creswell, 2014). Another common criticism lies in the subjective nature of the constructivist approach (Rolfe, 2006; Sandelowski, 1993). Nevertheless, Lincoln and Guba (1985) advocate for naturalistic inquiry as opposed to traditional positivist inquiry to research in the social sciences. In contrast to the positivist paradigm which considers discoverable knowledge as objective and value-free (Scotland, 2012), the constructivist view posits that research must be viewed from inside through the direct experience of the people involved (Mack, 2010). Accordingly, the role of the researcher is to "understand, explain, and demystify social reality through the eyes of different participants" (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 19). Constructivism was perceived to be an appropriate orientation to use for the current study given that the primary aim of the research was to explore the experiences and perspectives of youth participants concerning their involvement with an intervention in their community.

3.5 Research Design

3.5.1 Qualitative Approach

The ontological and epistemological stance of the researcher influences the methods for data gathering and interpretation (Willig & Stainton Rogers, 2017). Qualitative methodology was used to address the research question in this study. Quantitative approaches were deemed less appropriate as the aim was not to identify a single objective reality, or cause-effect relationships, but rather to obtain a rich and detailed understanding of participants' perspectives and experiences (Gelo et al., 2008); this study intended to focus on the meanings that participants attributed to their own experiences, rather than using preconceived variables which would lead to the imposition of the researcher's meanings (Willig, 2008). Furthermore, a qualitative approach was chosen in recognition that the researcher brings her subjectivity (i.e., her passions and perspectives) into the research process, in rejection of the concept of the

objective scientist researcher (Clarke & Braun, 2013).

3.5.2 Phenomenology

The constructivist paradigm has been heavily influenced by phenomenology (Mack, 2010). Rooted in the work of philosophers such as Husserl (1982), Heidegger (1962), Merleau-Ponty (1962), and Sartre (1956), phenomenology is "the study of human experience and of the ways things present themselves to us in and through such experience" (Sokolowski, 2000, p.2); put simply, it is the study of an individual's lived experience of the world. In contrast to researchers who consider social phenomena with objective distancing as 'things out there to be understood' (Bogdan & Taylor, 1975), phenomenological researchers strive to provide a name to 'things' constructed and named in the mind (Willis, 2001). Davis (1991, p. 5) summarised the thinking of Swingewood (1984) in suggesting that

> the meaning of things is not inherent in objects, but is actually located in the individual's inner life... The researcher's task is to understand reality as it is, actively and consciously created by subjects, not as a pure entity that exists 'out there'.

The goal is to describe the meaning of an experience, in terms of *'what'* was experienced and *'how'* (Teherani et al., 2015). Husserl's philosophy rejected positivism's absolute focus on objective observations of external reality and argued instead for the scientific study of phenomena as perceived by the individual's consciousness; he thus proposed that a lived experience of a phenomenon had features (or universal essences) commonly perceived by individuals who had experienced the same phenomenon, which could be identified to develop a generalisable description (Neubauer et al., 2019). The phenomenological researcher details the lived experiences of individuals regarding a specific phenomenon, as described by participants who have all experienced that phenomenon, in an attempt to build the essence of that experience (Creswell, 2014). Phenomena deemed worthy of study tend to be those experiences that are complex, poorly understood, or previously unexplored (McCormack &

Joseph, 2018). For the purpose of this study, the phenomenon being explored will be the lived experience of young people involved in a community psychology intervention.

Phenomenologists advocate for the importance of examining individuals' subjective interpretations and their perceptions of the world as the starting point in comprehending social phenomena (Ernest, 1994). In this regard, Berger and Luckmann (1966, p.34) posited that the phenomenological method of analysis is "best suited to clarify the foundations of knowledge in everyday life". Phenomenology allows us to learn from the experiences of others as it provides a rich understanding of phenomena as experienced by several individuals. Knowledge of common experiences, and the phenomenological approach in general, can be highly useful for professionals such as psychologists and other therapists, education and health personnel, and policymakers, in their pursuit to explore and understand lived experiences (Creswell, 2007; Langdridge, 2007). The current study will include the differences across the young people's experiences, along with the commonalities, to providea holistic understanding.

It should be noted that phenomenology necessitates an understanding of the broader philosophical assumptions that underpin the approach on the part of the researcher (Neubauer et al., 2019). Furthermore, research participants must be carefully chosen and identified as individuals who have all experienced a specific phenomenon, so that the researcher can ultimately forge a common understanding (Creswell, 2007); to this end, the following section will outline the criteria used for selecting participants for the current study.

3.5.3 Participant Recruitment Process

This study used a purposive sample; participants were chosen based on carefully considered selection or inclusion criteria. Inclusion criteria are key features of a target population which enable investigators to answer their research question (Patino & Ferreira, 2018). All of the participants were young people, aged between 16 and 25, who were involved with a specific youth-led community organisation. Participants were required to have at least

six months of experience with the organisation. As discussed later in this chapter, IPA was used to analyse the youths' responses. To use IPA, Smith et al., (2009, p49) suggest that studies should utilise a "fairly homogeneous sample for whom the research question will be meaningful". Homogeneity in the sample of participants allows the researcher to retain the idiographic emphasis of IPA, while embedding any emerging patterns from the data, such as convergent and divergent themes, in a rich and detailed context (Eatough & Smith, 2017). This study does not purport to be able to generalise or promote a generated theory; however, the homogeneity of the sample allowed the researcher to gain insight into the shared phenomenon of young people's experiences of a community psychology intervention. Information was gathered from the participants' regarding their gender, age, and length of involvement with the organisation. Given the small sample size, further identifying details (e.g., relating to ethnicity or other background information) was not obtained in order to protect the anonymity of individual accounts.

3.5.4 Context of the Study

Several youth-led community organisations, identified as operating according to a community psychology value base, were approached by the researcher. Ultimately, the manager of one youth-led organisation provided consent for the research to take place and the researcher was invited to attend two of the organisation's monthly meetings to meet the young people and to figure potentially recruit study participants. The two meetings took place during the same week; the two youth groups were differentiated according to the route by which they had originally joined the organisation. Otherwise, there was considerable overlap between the activities that both groups were involved with and therefore, homogeneity was satisfied between the two groups. At the meetings, the researcher explained to the youth attendees the objective of the current study, along with the requirements for participation. Each young person who expressed an interest in study participation was provided with an information sheet and

consent form, along with guidance on returning completed consent forms to the manager of the organisation. Follow-up contact was made with the youth members of the organisation through email, facilitated by the manager, to encourage recruitment. In total, six participants agreed to participate. Appendices D and E contain the information sheet and consent form. Figure 1 below outlines the stages of the recruitment process.

Figure 1

The Recruitment Process

Step 1	Contact was made with several youth-led community organisations.
Step 2	One organisation agreed to participate.
Step 3	The researcher attended two of the organisation's monthly meetings, providing youth attendees with information sheets and consent forms.
Step 4	Six youths agreed to participate in the study.
Step 5	The researcher arranged meetings for the individual interviews, liaising with the manager and with the youths themselves.
Step 6	Participant consent forms were given to each young person and signed before the interview.
Step 7	The youths were briefed about the study before the interviews took place.
Step 8	All six semi-structured interviews were conducted and digitally recorded.

3.5.5 Sample Size

Although Smith et al. (2009, p. 56) cautioned that "there is no right answer to the question of...sample size" in IPA research, smaller focused samples are usually used to embrace its commitment to idiography (Noon, 2018). Based on the adage that 'less is more', a sample size of between four to ten participants is generally considered to be acceptable for IPA studies at professional doctorate level (Hefferon & Gil-Rodriguez, 2011). A total of six youths who were involved in the youth-led community organisation volunteered to participate in the current study. This number was deemed to be acceptable to allow for a detailed analysis of each case, along with subsequent micro-analysis of similarities and differences across cases (Smith et al., 2009).

3.5.6 Overview of the Participants

To ensure anonymity and confidentiality, pseudonyms were given to the youths and although the youth-led organisation has been identified as Young Advisors (YA), this is a national organisation and the exact location of this specific franchise has not been disclosed. Table 3 below gives a brief overview of the participants in the study by gender, age, and length of involvement with the organisation.

Table 3

Overview of Participants

Pseudonym	Interview	Age	Gender	Length of involvement
Jack	1	24	Male	8 years
Chloe	2	22	Female	8 years 5 months
Joshua	3	18	Male	1 year 3 months
Megan	4	17	Female	2 years
Emily	5	16	Female	2 years
Charlotte	6	22	Female	9 years 11 months

3.6 Data Collection Method: Semi-Structured Interviews

3.6.1 Use of Semi-Structured Interviews

This study aimed to elicit detailed thoughts, stories, feelings, and constructs, from youth participants, about their involvement with a youth-led community organisation. According to Smith et al. (2009), IPA is best suited to data collection methods which facilitate participants to offer rich, detailed, first-person accounts of their experiences; they identified in-depth interviews as one of the best means for accessing such accounts. Qualitative interviewing offers a means of tackling problems that are otherwise difficult to approach (Carrera-Fernández et al., 2013; Mishler; 1986). However, overly structured approaches to interviewing have been criticised by qualitative researchers for not facilitating an explorative approach to human research (Englander, 2018). Instead, qualitative researchers tend to opt for a semi-structured format to interviewing, consisting of predetermined questions for the research purpose and the

phenomenon being studied but with a degree of flexibility afforded to the interviewer who is permitted to follow up the specified questions "as he or she deems necessary to obtain sufficient information regarding the content area of interest" (Craighead & Nemeroff, 2002, p.1639). The flexibility of the method allows researchers to direct interviews to gather the information required to address the research question and facilitates the co-construction of meaning between the researcher and interviewees (Gubrium et al., 2012). The researcher plays an active role as "knowledge is constructed in the interaction between the interviewer and interviewee" (Kvale, 2007, p1). Individual semi-structured qualitative interviews were used to gather data for the current study; this has tended to be the preferred mode for collecting data for IPA studies (Reid et al., 2005).

It should be noted, however, that the phenomenological interviewer prioritises the interaction and the interpersonal context over the questions asked, maintaining the Rogerian (Rogers, 1945) stance of trust and actively following the lived experience of the interviewee (Englander, 2020). The researcher creates an environment in which the participant experiences a sense of trust and feels safe (in a psychological sense) to explore in-depth their lived experience of the phenomenon under study (Englander, 2020). Smith et al. (2009) emphasised the importance of the interviewer establishing rapport with the participant to facilitate the collection of 'good data', ensuring that interviewees have "the space to think, speak and be heard" (p.57). In this respect, the researcher adopted a probing stance to interpret the meaningful worlds offered by interviewees, endeavouring to be empathetic but also questioning when needed (Smith & Eatough, 2006). Fundamentally, the role of the research interviewer is to ask "questions that lead the subjects to tell their own stories of their lived world" (Kvale, 1996, p.4). Within the current study, it was hoped that allowing the young people to have their voices and stories heard in this manner could go some way towards fulfilling an emancipatory goal for the research.

3.6.2 Interview Procedures

To ensure good practice, the researcher identified the following principles to abide by in the interview, informed by legislation and by research on interviewing young people:

- The participants were free to select when they wanted to be interviewed.
- Each of the interviews took place in the same location, which was a comfortable setting, free from potential noise and disruptions (McGrath et al., 2019).
- Following best practice guidelines (Robson, 2011), the interviews aimed to be 60 minutes in length.
- The interviews were recorded using a digital audio recorder.
- Questions were open-ended, neutral, and clear, avoiding leading language (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019).
- Similarly, questions used familiar language and avoided jargon (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019).
- Participants could ask for questions to be repeated or clarified, and they could respond that they did not know the answer to a question.
- The interviewer actively listened to the participants (Given, 2008), respecting silence and recognising silent moments as opportunities for ongoing reflection and as catalysts to drive the conversation forward (McGrath et al., 2019).
- The interviewer kept any interruptions to a minimum, allowing narratives to flow naturally, and giving interviewees as much time as necessary to elaborate and explain their experiences (Alsaawi, 2014; Dörnyei, 2007).

3.6.3 Interview Schedule

An interview schedule was compiled to allow the interviewer to maintain some control of the interview and to address the aims of the research. The purpose of an interview schedule is to facilitate "a comfortable interaction with the participant which will, in turn, enable

them to provide a detailed account of the experience under investigation" (Smith et al., 2009, p59). To ensure that good-quality data was gathered, the interviews were open-ended and the interviewer maintained a careful balance between guiding and being led; the interview schedule was relatively short, beginning with broad, general questions that allowed the participant to set the topic parameters, rather than the other way around (Hefferon & Gil- Rodriguez, 2011). The schedule was created thinking about the range of topics that might be pertinent to youth experiences of community organisations. Consideration was given to wording and phrasing, to ensure that questions were open (rather than closed) and to avoid making too many assumptions or leading participants toward certain answers (Smith et al., 2009). Questions were sequenced so that descriptive or narrative questions were posed at the start to help set the scene, whereas more analytic or evaluative questions were asked later once the participant felt more comfortable talking. Probing and prompting questions were included to encourage participants to talk in-depth and to elaborate further on points. The set of questions which were used to guide the course of the interview can be found in Appendix F. However, as noted above, the schedule was employed flexibly and in a responsive, sensitive, and collaborative manner, and if the participant chose to open up interesting and novel areas of inquiry, these were pursued (Eatough & Smith, 2017).

3.6.4 Interview Briefing and Debriefing

The researcher provided each participant with a similar briefing introduction about the research before the interview commencing. The aims of the research were outlined, along with information regarding the researcher's background and professional training. The researcher described how the information gathered in the interview would be audio-recorded, stored, analysed, and later disseminated, and participants were assured that their anonymity would be protected. The purpose of the interview schedule was also explained and participants were assured that there were no right or wrong answers. The participants were invited to ask

questions and they were reminded of their right to withdraw from participation at any point during the interview and within four weeks after the interview before analysis took place. Verbal and written consent was sought from each participant before commencing the interview.

Following each interview, the participants were offered time and space if they felt they needed it, having disclosed personal and sensitive information. It was explained to the participants that the findings would be typed up as part of a doctorate thesis and the researcher would contact participants at a later date to share the study findings. Furthermore, the participants were informed that a meeting would be arranged with all of the young people who had taken part in the study to discuss the completed research and possible ways to share the findings more widely.

3.6.5 Interview Transcription

The researcher used a transcription service to transcribe all six of the interviews using a verbatim format capturing all of the spoken words, including filler words such as “ah”, “uh” and “om”, and incomplete sentences. Pauses and laughter were also included.

3.7 Data Analysis Method: Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA)

There are different research methodological approaches within phenomenology, each rooted in their own school of philosophy. Reflecting on the philosophical underpinnings of the current study, the phenomenological approach chosen was IPA (Smith et al., 2009) as the approach allows for the detailed examination of personal lived experience (Smith & Osborn, 2015), deemed to be most pertinent to the research question.

IPA is characterised by a commitment to understanding the participant’s point of view, along with a psychological focus on personal meaning-making in particular contexts (Reid et al., 2005; Smith et al., 2009). In contrast to descriptive phenomenology which is rooted in realist ontological assumptions, requiring the researcher to bracket their subjectivity and personal experiences during data collection and analysis, interpretative phenomenology recognises that

the researcher is part of the world and not bias-free, and therefore encourages researchers to reflect on their own experiences (Neubauer et al., 2019) and to decide how and in what way their personal understandings should be introduced into the study (Creswell, 2007).

IPA is a qualitative research methodology conceptualised by Smith (1996). The approach recognises people, and the worlds that they inhabit, "as socially and historically contingent and contextually bounded" (Eatough & Smith, 2017, p.194). The primary focus of IPA is the individual's subjective experience of the phenomenon and the sense that they make of their experience, as opposed to the structure of the phenomenon itself; this focus appeals to qualitative, applied psychologists, who are interested in comprehending experiences of significance to individuals, which can lead them to recast aspects of their lives in the pursuit of meaning-making (Eatough & Smith, 2017). An irrevocable tension exists in powerful phenomenological texts "between what is unique and what is shared, between particular and transcendent meaning, and between the reflective and the prereflective spheres of the lifeworld" (Van Manen, 1997, p.345) and to manage these tensions, researchers are required to engage in reflective and reflexive analysis, moving back and forth between experience and awareness and between focusing on the parts and the whole (Finlay, 2014). A two-stage interpretation process takes place, involving the researcher attempting to interpret how participants make sense of their experience (Pringle et al., 2011), also described as a 'double hermeneutic' (Smith, 2004). IPA researchers explore the semantic content and language used at multiple levels, including descriptive (i.e., taking explicit meanings at face value), linguistic (e.g., noting metaphors) and conceptual (i.e., taking a more analytic approach) (Finlay, 2014).

Smith at al. (2009) identified the primary theoretical underpinnings of IPA as phenomenology, hermeneutics, and idiography.

3.7.1 Hermeneutics

Hermeneutics refers to the theory and practice of interpretation (Dyer, 2010) and it

involves “the restoration of meaning” (Ricoeur, 1970, p. 8). To gain an insider view of an experience, IPA requires the use of a double hermeneutic; “the participant is trying to make sense of their personal and social world; the researcher is trying to make sense of the participant trying to make sense of their personal and social world” (Smith, 2004, p. 40). Interpretations are therefore contingent on the participant’s ability to articulate their experiences, and the researcher’s capacity to dissect them (Noon, 2018). Accordingly, Smith et al. (2009, p.35) stated that “detective work is required by the researcher to facilitate the coming forth, and then to make sense of it once it has happened”; they proposed a hermeneutics of empathy and a hermeneutics of suspicion to foster the double hermeneutic. A hermeneutics of empathy is adopted by the researcher reconstructing the participant’s original experience, the means by which the words of the participant are entered into and an insider’s view is obtained. The hermeneutics of suspicion or questioning, meanwhile, allows for the participant’s account to be investigated or puzzled over, exploring why a participant says something in a certain way, therefore constructing a particular meaning. Smith et al. (2009) encouraged IPA researchers to adopt both stances, advising that “empathic reading is likely to come first and may then be qualified by a more critical and speculative reflection” (Smith, 2004, p. 46). However, it should be noted that IPA acknowledges the impossibility of directly gaining full insight into the personal world of another, and their understanding of their experiences (Noon, 2018). Instead, IPA endeavours to “get as ‘close’ to the participant’s view as is possible” (Larkin et al., 2006, p.104).

It is also recognised that the process of interpretation is inevitably influenced by the researcher’s assumptions and preconceptions (Heidegger, 1962). As a consequence, Moustakas (1994) proposed the ‘bracketing’ of researchers’ personal beliefs and experiences from that of the participants’ lived experiences. However, a hermeneutic version of phenomenology also advocates for interpreting and bringing awareness (and analysis) to what the researcher brings

to the text, viewed as an integral component of phenomenological analysis (Willig, 2008).

3.7.2 Idiography

IPA is idiographic in its commitment to examining the detailed experience of individual cases in unique contexts regarding a given phenomenon, before moving on to more general claims (Smith & Osborn, 2015). It aims to learn from participants' individual stories, and through in-depth individualised analyses, it strives to gain a more informed understanding of people's thoughts, beliefs and behaviours (Noon, 2018). In contrast to most psychology, which is 'nomothetic' in orientation, concerned with making claims at the group or population levels, IPA engages in a thorough and systematic analysis at the individual level to understand how particular people in a particular context, experience phenomena (Smith et al., 2009). Harré (1979, p.137) argued that theories, particularly in the social sciences, should start from an idiographic base, "aimed always at a cautious climb up the ladder of generality, seeking for universal structures but reaching them only by a painful, step by step approach". Accordingly, IPA studies remain faithful to the individual, commonly using small and situated samples so that each individual can be attended to idiographically, before attempting a comparative cross-case analysis of participant material (Eatough & Smith, 2017).

3.7.3 Phenomenology

The third component of IPA is phenomenology, which is the research approach adopted by the current study. It has already been discussed within the research design section above.

3.7.4 Rationale for Choosing IPA

IPA is a research methodology of increasing dominance and popularity in psychological research (Hefferon & Gil-Rodriguez, 2011). It was the chosen methodology for the current study for several reasons.

The aims of the research were felt to align best with a phenomenological theoretical approach. IPA is rooted in phenomenology and in the analysis of data from participants who

have particular experience and understanding of a phenomenon; the focus of this study was youths' experiences of their involvement with a youth-led community organisation.

IPA was also chosen because the approach allows for an idiographic and interpretative understanding of individual perceptions, felt to be the most appropriate way to explore and understand young people's experiences of the particular phenomenon (i.e., involvement with a youth-led community organisation).

IPA was also believed to be an appropriate orientation as the objective was to gain a rich and nuanced insight into the accounts provided by the youths regarding their experiences, the meanings they ascribed to their experiences, and the sense that they made of their experiences. This approach to phenomenological research can offer a complete and in-depth account that privileges the individual, enabling researchers to access, hear, and understand, the experiences of participants (Pringle et al., 2011).

Before selecting IPA, alternative qualitative research methods were considered; quantitative methods were not considered owing to the ontological position and the exploratory nature of the research. In particular, Grounded Theory was considered as, similar to IPA, the approach assumes that individuals construct their selves and their worlds through interaction (Charmaz, 2008). However, Grounded Theory was ultimately ruled out as the objective of the approach to explain phenomena to some degree (Chun Tie et al., 2019) did not fit with the idiographic nature of this study. The focus of the current study is on the individual subjective experience, rather than on the generalisability of human experience. Accordingly, it was felt that IPA fit best with the researcher's relativist and social constructivist positioning.

3.7.5 Criticisms of IPA

Criticisms and limitations of IPA have been identified in the literature. The idiographic nature of accounts in IPA studies has been identified as a weakness, with suggestions that generalisations are not feasible from such studies owing to the subjectivity of experience and

findings (Giorgi, 2011; Malim et al., 1992). Similarly, Pringle et al. (2011) identified the small numbers involved in most IPA studies as creating a challenge in establishing which variables are of significance, in comparison with approaches such as Grounded Theory, which use relatively larger sample sizes to substantiate theory (Thomson, 2011). However, Smith et al. (2009) proposed that small sample sizes allow for a more rich and detailed level of analysis. Furthermore, it is recognised that commonalties and analytic observations across accounts in IPA studies can lead to valuable insights with wider implications (Reid et al., 2005) and findings can offer context and contribute to theory development (Cassidy et al., 2011). Offering insight at the individual level can contribute towards developing insight into the whole (Pringle et al., 2011) and thus, IPA studies can be explanatory and exploratory. This aligns with guidance offered by Smith et al. (2009) who encouraged IPA researchers to "think in terms of theoretical transferability rather than empirical generalizability" (p.51). Ensuring that the research account is sufficiently detailed and transparent will then enable the reader to assess and evaluate transferability (Pringle et al., 2011). However, it should be noted that interpretations are bounded by the capacity of the participant to adequately articulate their thoughts and experiences (Baillie et al., 2000; Willig, 2008) and by the capability of the researcher to reflect and analyse (Brocki & Wearden, 2006).

3.7.6 Procedures for Data Analysis

The process of data analysis in IPA is systematic, flexible, and multi-directional (Finlay, 2014). IPA is characterised by common processes such as moving the focus from the descriptive to the interpretative and between the individual's particular experience, and the shared experience of all participants (Smith et al., 2009). The IPA literature does not dictate a strict set of procedure guidelines; however, this study will predominantly follow the stages depicted by Smith et al. (2009). A detailed outline of the how the stages of IPA were employed in this study can be found in Appendix G. Meanwhile, Appendix H contains an outline of the IPA data trail

procedure, including a table describing the frequency of the findings of the study. An overview of the stages of the data analysis procedures employed in the current study is shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4

Steps of the IPA Process (Smith et al., 2009)

Step 1	**Listening and reading** • The researcher became immersed in the original data by listening to the first audio-recorded interview and simultaneously reading the related written transcription, several times.
Step 2	**Initial note-taking** • As the data was read and listened to several times, initial notes were added to the transcript, including descriptive, linguistic and conceptual comments.
Step 3	**Identification of emergent themes** Comments were made to identify emergent themes.
Step 4	**Development of subordinate themes** • Connections were established across emergent themes to develop subordinate themes.
Step 5	**Repeat Steps 1-4 for all six participants** • Steps 1 through 4 were repeated with the second, third, fourth, fifth, and sixth interviews.
Step 6	**Development of superordinate themes** • The researcher looked for patterns across the six cases to identify superordinate themes.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

Researchers must anticipate ethical issues that may arise during the research process to minimise harm and protect participants and communities, maintain trust and protect the integrity of research, and help to cope with new, challenging problems that could arise (Israel & Hay, 2006). Before undertaking this study, a research protocol was submitted to the Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust Research Ethics Committee (TREC); full ethical approval was granted for the study to proceed. A copy of the ethical approval form can be found in Appendix Q. The protocol, and the subsequent research, adhere to the guidelines for conducting psychological research as stipulated by the BPS (2018) Code of Ethics and Conduct. These principles are detailed in Appendix R. The following steps, structured according to the

BPS (2018) ethical principles, were taken to ensure that the research was carried out ethically.

3.8.1 Respect

- Privacy and confidentiality were assured throughout the implementation and analysis stages of the research process. Under the Data Protection Act (2018) and University of Essex Guidelines, all data gathered was anonymised and kept confidential. Consent forms, audio-recorded interviews, and transcripts were encoded with pseudonyms, used throughout the study.
- Data was stored on a secure, password-protected memory device, which the researcher had sole access to. Digital recordings of the interviews and the transcripts were stored using pseudonyms in password-protected files on the researcher's computer. Similarly, the completed consent forms were stored in a locked filing cabinet, which only the researcher had access to.
- The audio files on the digital voice recorder were deleted once they had been uploaded onto the computer. After five years, paper documents will be shredded and electronic data will be fully deleted.
- Respect for the dignity of participants was maintained throughout the research process and there was no discrimination of participants in terms of ethnicity, gender, social status, capacities, or any other such group-based characteristic.
- The manager of the organisation was consulted before the research study took place to ensure that she consented to the young people being approached and interviewed.
- Informed consent was also obtained from each participant before the interview after they had read a participant information sheet (Appendix D) and participant consent form (Appendix E). The consent forms recorded the participants' name, signature, and the date that consent was obtained.
- Participants were informed of their right to withdraw from participation at any time

during the interview and for any reason. They were also informed that they could withdraw from the study up to four weeks after the interview had taken place and their data would be destroyed.

- Participants were informed that confidentiality would be maintained up to an extent; for example, confidentiality could be breached by the researcher if the participant made a disclosure that raised safeguarding concerns.
- The information sheet also stated that it was a small-scale study, involving a small number of participants, and so there would be a chance that participants could recognise some of the things that they said in the final report.
- The researcher endeavoured to be transparent about the research aims, requirements for participation, and plans for disseminating the results.
- Within the interview setting, space was provided to the participants to share their feelings, through the use of empathy, warmth, authenticity, and active listening skills. The open-ended nature of the questions posed meant that participants were free to choose what they wanted to disclose.

3.8.2 Competence

- The researcher endeavoured to be reflexive and to adopt a reflective stance (Lichtman, 2014) when exploring the process and the findings of the study, along with the effects of the research on the researcher herself.
- The researcher availed of support from a research supervisor and consulted with a research peer supervision group. Supervision was accessed throughout the planning, implementation, analysis, and write-up of the study. This enabled the researcher to question, clarify, and refine her thinking about the research process.
- Supervision was particularly sought when challenges arose in the research process.

3.8.3 Responsibility

- Throughout the interviews, the researcher strived to minimise any potential risks of harm to the participants.
- Young people were the focus of the study and their welfare, including their dignity, and their social, emotional, and psychological wellbeing, was prioritised throughout.
- The researcher remained cognisant of the potential emotional impact of eliciting information of a personal, emotional, and sensitive nature from the participants. They were informed of their right to refrain from answering any questions and the researcher, who is a trained mental health professional, was available to provide support after the interview, should any difficulties arise. The participants were also provided with the researcher's contact details to allow them to arrange a follow-up meeting if difficulties arose at a later stage.

3.8.4 Integrity

- The information sheet provided to each participant accurately outlined the professional and academic qualifications and affiliations of the researcher.
- The researcher ensured that interviews were conducted with young people who had at least six months of experience within the organisation.
- None of the participants were known to the researcher before involvement in the study.
- The information sheet included contact details for the research supervisor, based atthe Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust. Participants were advised that theycould contact the research supervisor, or the researcher herself, should they have any questions or concerns about any aspect of the research.

3.9 Reliability of the Study

Although some authors have attempted to identify criteria for evaluating the quality of qualitative research in psychology (e.g., Elliott et al., 1999; Henwood & Pidgeon, 1992; Yardley, 2000), it has been argued that no single set of evaluation criteria can be applied to all

types of qualitative research, owing to differences in epistemological approaches and qualitative research paradigms (Madill et al. 2000; Reicher, 2000). Instead, it is suggested that the criteria for evaluating qualitative research needs to be tailored to the particular method employed (Willig, 2008).

There is no specific evaluation tool for use with IPA research. Nevertheless, the four key principles for validity outlined by Yardley (2008) were selected to assess the quality of the current research study, following the recommendation of Smith et al. (2009) who considered the criteria to be accessible, broad-ranging, and offering a variety of ways of establishing quality. The current study will be explored according to the four key principles of validity identified by Yardley (2008): sensitivity to context, commitment and rigour, coherence and transparency, and impact and importance.

3.9.1 Sensitivity to Context

According to Yardley (2008), one way of establishing sensitivity to context is by developing awareness of relevant theories, literature, and empirical research, relevant to the chosen topic, and by engaging in a sophisticated interpretation of such data. Yardley (2008) particularly highlighted the crucial nature of relating study findings and observations to previous results in the research literature, explaining that many qualitative researchers strive to link their research to the work of others as a form of 'vertical generalisability' (Johnson, 1997). Through extensive reading and systematic review of the literature, researchers can also determine gaps in the research literature to avoid "rediscovering what is already known" (Yardley, 2008, p237). The aims, research question, and methodology of the current study were developed following a thorough and systematic review of the literature into young people's experiences of community psychology interventions. Sensitivity to context was also facilitated by maintaining an awareness of the social-cultural setting of the study per the guidance of Yardley (2008) who argued that language, culture, and social interaction, are central to the

functioning and meaning of all phenomena. Furthermore, the current study ensured sensitivity to the data by respecting the differing perspectives of the participants involved (Yardley, 2008), ensuring that they have a voice through incorporating verbatim extracts throughout the findings section.

3.9.2 Commitment and Rigour

Concerning commitment, Yardley (2008) advocated for prolonged engagement with the research topic, immersion in the data, and for the development of confidence and skills in the research methods used. Rigour, meanwhile, refers to the 'completeness' of data collection and analysis, which, in phenomenological research, often relates to the quality of the interview, the 'depth' of the data gathered, and the subsequent analysis or interpretation. In this study, the researcher accessed supervision regularly as a means of developing skills and confidence in the chosen methodology, and to share codes to conduct a form of inter-rater reliability (Boyatzis, 1998); any disagreements about codes were resolved through discussion. Commitment and rigour were also established through outlining the philosophical underpinnings of the study and by identifying the ontological and epistemological stance of the researcher. Furthermore, the researcher provided a reasoned argument for choosing IPA methodology, outlining the strengths and limitations of the approach. Importantly, information was provided about the process for recruiting participants to address the research question and the criteria for homogeneity, identified by Smith et al. (2009, p.3) as allowing for the detailed examination of convergence and divergence within the sample, as well as allowing for "theoretical generalizability", so that the reader can assess the evidence to their existing experiential and professional knowledge.

3.9.3 Coherence and Transparency

According to Yardley (2008), the principle of transparency involves the incorporation of researcher reflexivity throughout the study; the researcher should openly reflect how factors

such as personal experiences and motivations, along with external constraints or pressures, may have affected the research study. Accordingly, the researcher endeavoured to remain reflexive throughout the research process. Consideration of researcher reflexivity will be examined in more detail later in this chapter. Transparency can also be promoted by describing in detail the research process, including the processes of data collection and analysis, and by providing excerpts from the transcripts so that readers can discern patterns of analysis identified by the researcher (Yardley, 2008). A degree of questioning contributes to the depth of analysis in IPA (Smith et al 2009); however, implications stemming from IPA need to be securely rooted in what the participants have actually said, with direct quotes used to substantiate claims (Pringle et al., 2011). Consequently, the researcher outlined the methodology of the current study with as much clarity as possible. Furthermore, examples of the data analysis process are presented in the Appendices, to support the study's claims to coherency and transparency.

3.9.4 Impact and Importance

Yardley (2008) proposed that the most decisive criteria for judging a research study should be its utility and impact. The discussion chapter will outline the contribution of the findings of this study to the research literature in the field. The intention is to provide greater insight into the experiences of young people involved in community psychology interventions. The role of the Educational Psychologist (EP) will be considered, along with implications for how professionals, in general, could work more effectively supporting such interventions.

3.10 Robustness of Design

Credibility is an important means of assessing the trustworthiness of a research study; it concerns the extent to which a research account is appropriate and believable (Mills et al., 2009). The researcher used two methods to ensure credibility: audit trail and reflexivity. Member checking (i.e., returning to participants following data analysis) was not used as a technique for establishing credibility in recognition of the view that reality is multiple and

constructed and therefore it was not expected that respondents would arrive at the same categories and themes as the researcher (Sandelowski, 1993); it was felt that an attempt to increase reliability involving such an artificial, forced consensus and conformity in the data analysis, would be at the expense of the meaningfulness or validity of the findings (Rolfe, 2006).

3.10.1 Audit Trail

The validity of a research report can be assessed by filing all of the data in such a way that the reader can follow the chain of evidence leading from initial raw data through to the final report (Yin, 1989). Smith et al. (2009) advocated for the use of such 'independent audits' or audit trails as a powerful means of addressing research validity.

Researchers should produce an audit trail for the course of the research process, alongside providing the rationale underpinning research decisions (Rolfe, 2006). Following the guidance of Koch and Harrington (1998), researchers should engage in ongoing self-appraisal and self-critique, and they should identify their moral, social and political positioning. The researcher has provided an audit trail for each stage of the research process to offer clarity and transparency regarding the decision-making processes. An example of an analysed interview with emergent themes can be found in Appendix I, whereas Appendix J provides an example of the emergent themes for one transcript (Joshua). Appendix K contains the subordinate and emergent themes table. Appendices L, M, N, O, and P provide the data trails for the other five participants and Appendix H displays the final table of subordinate and superordinate themes.

3.10.2 Researcher Reflexivity

The role of the researcher in qualitative studies is quite different to that of quantitative studies; the qualitative researcher is considered to be an instrument of data collection (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). In IPA, the analyst adopts the central role in understanding and making sense of the personal experiences of participants (Pringle et al., 2011; Smith, 2004). As a

consequence, such researchers are required to be reflexive and self-appraise, turning the researcher lens back onto themselves to develop awareness and to take ownership for their positioning within the research, and the effect that this may have on the participants, the questions posed, the data collected, and its interpretation (Berger, 2015).

The researcher was aware of her various insider (e.g., concerning gender, and previous professional role supporting children and young people in the borough) and outsider positions (e.g., concerning age, race, and her status as an academic researcher) (Gallais, 2008) and she considered the impact that these positions may have had on the research. To counteract the effects of researcher bias, the investigator should self-disclose her assumptions and personal beliefs early on in the research process (Creswell & Miller, 2000). These will be shared in the following sections. However, reflexivity is essential throughout all phases of the research process (Mills et al., 2009); therefore, the researcher availed of peer supervision, and individual supervision with her research tutor, to develop her self-awareness and to avoid her biases and preconceptions unduly influencing the study. A research diary was also used to facilitate reflexivity, to record the stages of the research process and to foster the development of ideas (Fox, Martin and Green, 2007). Prolonged engagement with the data, and incorporating the researcher's judgment, reasoning, and emotional reactions into the audit trail, were further strategies used to maintain reflexivity (Berger, 2015).

For this section, the author will take a reflective and self-reflexive position to provide the history and current context to her role as the researcher. She is a white female immigrant from a western European country, which influences her practice and beliefs. Her country of origin has one of the highest rates of adolescent suicide and self-harm in Europe. Despite the prevalence of mental health difficulties, there is limited access to mental health services for children and young people. Furthermore, the country contains a high level of income disparity, and life on a low income has become the norm for a large proportion of the society, further

exacerbated by the recent Covid-19 crisis. The researcher experienced this system, and the dearth of supports, as a student, and later in her professional capacities as a primary school teacher and as an EP.

The researcher's country of origin has a long tradition of voluntary activity and charitable service, however, forming a substantial element of national economic and social life. In particular, there is a culture of 'caritas' dating back to medieval times, which incorporates the notion of doing 'good work' for the benefit of others. This has contributed to a sense of solidarity, shared identity, and the development of local community self-help initiatives, often in the absence of, or complementing, state delivery of social services. The researcher has a long history of voluntary experience and engagement with community-led grassroots initiatives, which she has thoroughly enjoyed and to which she attributes significant gains in social capital, in gaining access to academic and employment opportunities, and developing an activist identity through awareness of the struggles of marginalised groups. It is the personal view of the researcher that involvement with community psychology interventions can lead to significant gains at the individual and community levels, particularly in, but not limited to, areas of increased deprivation.

At the time that data collection took place, the researcher was employed as an EP with a local education authority educational psychology service in a different area of the country. Although she was previously employed as an EP in the borough where data collection took place, she did not have prior acquaintance with any of the research participants, thus minimising the risk of social desirability bias due to any previously existing relationships. Nevertheless, her previous status as an EP in the borough facilitated the recruitment of participants as the researcher first established contact with the manager of the organisation while she was still working in the borough.

The researcher attempted to mediate any power differentials that may have existed

between the researcher and the researched by recognising the participants as experts in the specific experience under study (Råheim et al., 2016). It was also hoped that the outsider status of the researcher, unfamiliar with the particular intervention, might enable her to approach the study from a fresh and novel viewpoint, asking different questions that could lead to innovative directions and discoveries (Berger, 2015).

The goal of the researcher in carrying out this research was to discover knowledge that might develop an awareness of, and further enhance, benefits for young people involved in community psychology interventions. A secondary aim was to encourage EPs to expand their role in supporting the delivery of community psychology interventions, developing understanding and capacity in this area. However, being mindful of these personal goals, the researcher endeavoured to ensure that her approach towards participants was as objective as possible, should they hold and state alternative views. The researcher also informed the participants that she was researching their personal views and experiences about the community-led service, and not evaluating the specific provision; this was to avoid the participants feeling that they might need to focus on providing the researcher with reports of 'good practice'. Before carrying out the interviews, the researcher expected to obtain a variety of views and experiences.

Finally, the researcher was aware that it might be difficult for participants to disclose their negative personal experiences. Consequently, she endeavoured to be approachable, empathetic, self-aware, and considerate of the needs of the participants (Tracy, 2010) and she recognised and valued 'connectedness' between the researcher and the researched (Ellis, 2007). As a consequence, she provided the participants with effective debriefing, including details about the research process and means of accessing the research findings, should they wish to do so.

4. **FINDINGS**

4.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter outlines the study's findings in answer to the research question, following individual and cross-case IPA analysis. The chapter commences by providing a thematic overview of the subordinate and superordinate themes which emerged from the six transcripts. The experiences of each participant will then be presented. Key verbatim quotations will be used to illustrate the findings, referenced with the corresponding line numbers from the respective transcripts. Finally, the cross-case findings will be presented, identifying the convergence and divergence across the participants' narratives.

The aim of this chapter is to detail some of the complexity of the experiences reported at an individual level, as well as across a reasonably homogenous group of young people aged 16-25 who were involved in the same youth-led community development organisation. Given that this study is based on the qualitative IPA of a small sample, the reader is reminded of the tentative and idiographic nature of the findings.

4.2 Cross-case Overview of Superordinate and Subordinate Themes

4.2.1 Thematic Overview

Six superordinate themes emerged from the interpretative analysis and these were shared by all six participants: 'conceptualisation of the YA role', 'YA and the construct of self', 'personal growth through YA involvement', 'factors attributed to the effectiveness of the role', 'challenges in role', and 'factors contributing to continued involvement'. Each superordinate theme has several related subordinate themes. These are presented in Table 5 below, along with a visual representation of the prevalence of subordinate themes across participants; some of the experiences were shared among all participants, whereas others were specific to individuals. Although themes were separated during the analytic process, many of these are related, which will be apparent throughout the narrative accounts. It is therefore essential to consider each

theme in relation to the holistic experience and the hermeneutic circle.

Table 5

Thematic Overview of Findings Relating to Each Participant

Superordinate Theme A: Conceptualisation of the YA role						
Subordinate Themes	Jack	Chloe	Joshua	Megan	Emily	Charlotte
A varied role	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Promoting change for individuals in the community	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Affecting Change at a systemic level	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
A flexible and youth-led working model	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Superordinate Theme B: YA and the construct of self						
Subordinate Themes	Jack	Chloe	Joshua	Megan	Emily	Charlotte
Negative self-concept pre-YA involvement	✓			✓		
Journey into YA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
YA as a significant turning point in life	✓					
Impact of YA on current view of self	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ageing out of YA as a threat to identity	✓					✓
Conceptualising the future self	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Superordinate Theme C: Personal growth through YA involvement						
Subordinate Themes	Jack	Chloe	Joshua	Megan	Emily	Charlotte
Building skills and competencies	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Aiding future career prospects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Developing relationships with others	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Superordinate Theme D: Factors attributed to the effectiveness of the role						
Subordinate Themes	Jack	Chloe	Joshua	Megan	Emily	Charlotte
Youth-led approach	✓		✓		✓	✓
Preventative approach	✓			✓	✓	
Directly engaging with community members	✓	✓		✓		✓
Organisational factors		✓		✓		✓
Power situated within the YA role			✓	✓	✓	✓
Peer-to-peer support		✓			✓	✓

Superordinate Theme E: Challenges in role						
Subordinate Themes	Jack	Chloe	Joshua	Megan	Emily	Charlotte
Difficulties arising during street work	✓		✓	✓		
YA positioning in relation to the council	✓	✓	✓			
Difficulties in youth-adult community collaborations	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Organisational factors		✓			✓	✓
Limitations in the power of the YA role					✓	
Relationship difficulties					✓	✓
Time			✓	✓		✓
Superordinate Theme F: Factors contributing to continued involvement						
Subordinate Themes	Jack	Chloe	Joshua	Megan	Emily	Charlotte
Quality of the YA work	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Within person factors	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Views and behaviours of others	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Organisational factors	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Power of the YA role	✓			✓		✓
Motivated by addressing particular community issues	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

4.3 Jack's Conceptualisations and Lived Experiences

4.3.1 Conceptualisation of the YA Role

Jack conceptualised the YA role as involving a variety of activities. He referred to his involvement with the Streetbase youth engagement programme (53-55) and helping "the council put on certain events for young people" (38-40). He also discussed his position as "Deputy Youth Mayor" (257) of the borough.

In describing outcomes from his YA role, Jack detailed change being affected for individuals within the community through the delivery of peer training on gang prevention (922-928). Jack also gave examples of the YA role allowing members to affect change at systemic levels such as facilitating the council "in making decisions" (9) that impact young people.

Jack's description of the YA working model was youth-led and flexible, from the initial interview "with young people" (384-385) to the flexibility afforded to him in his role to exert personal agency and to adapt his service delivery based on his judgment and needs arising (163-167).

4.3.2 YA and the Construct of Self

Jack created distance with his old self before YA involvement, noting "where I was 10 years ago is so different" (139-140). According to Jack, he experienced difficulties at school (1376-1385) and he felt lost and unsupported (316), perceiving that "nothing's really gonna go for me anymore" (321-322). Jack also experienced relationship (192) and emotional difficulties (1637-1641). He perceived that he was on a troubled path and he believed that he was "labelled a bad kid" (294).

Consequently, Jack believes that joining YA "changed my life" (262). According to Jack, YA "opened my mind" (1078) and "gave me a chance" (1399), offering him hope and opportunities (1671-1673). YA offered a redemptive and self-actualising influence on Jack's life as it "helps me be who I want" (1042-1043); he explained, "I shown my qualities there, that I wasn't a bad kid" (395-396). Jack struggled to contemplate life without YA, saying "I don't even wanna think about how my life would've been" (1372-1374).

Jack believes that he has become more self-aware (1650) through YA involvement. He now perceives himself as having a strong individual identity; within YA, he believes "I'm listened to and I'm valued" (804-805), and he perceives that he has become "a household name" (254) in the borough. Jack views himself as an advocate for his community area (718-719) and he perceives that he is "making a positive change in the borough" (1049-1050).

Jack is mindful that this is his "final year" (1761) with YA due to the upper age limit. He appears to be striving to hold onto his valued YA identity, explaining "I'm trying to sign up to as much as I can" (1764) and expressing his desire for YA to "raise the age limit"

(1752). Jack expressed uncertainty and hope for the future, stating "who knows what the future holds" (1776).

Jack expressed an ongoing commitment to community action and to empowering others (1765-1766). He hopes to start his "own young movement" (1773-1774) or "group network" (1798) of young people "who wanna make a change" (1801); he aims to develop community participation and to let community members know that "there's more to this borough than just living in it" (1446-1447).

4.3.3 Personal Growth Through YA Work

Jack attributed YA involvement with developing a range of his skills and competencies. He has received "free training" (861) and acquired "qualifications" (858) in "first aid" (852) and resuscitation (856). Jack has become more politically engaged; "I just thought that the council is just council members and th- that will, politics will never be me. But Young Advisors opened my mind" (1075-1078). Jack believes that he has improved his ability to communicate and to express his emotions, explaining how he has learned to use "words" (1643) rather than resorting "to violence or abuse to get [his] point across" (1645- 1646).

Jack believes that YA will help his "future career" (1339) prospects. He suggested that YA has developed his work readiness skills (274-276) and enhanced his "CV" (85). He perceives that the experience he is gaining through YA is valuable because YA members are "seen as professionals" (1181).

Socially, Jack believes that YA has "made my relationships better" (1584) and has "grown" his social network (1598); he is particularly grateful to have met his "best friend" (1742) through YA. According to Jack, YA is forging connections across diversity, explaining that the organisation "brought us, like, the connections together" (1726-1727). Jack also reported that he has fostered connections to local "services" (1606).

4.3.4 Factors Attributed to the Effectiveness of the Role

Jack identified the youth-led approach of YA as one factor attributing to the effectiveness of the role (74), with "peer-to-peer engagement" (81-82) allowing for greater access to youths in the community. Jack believes in the power of sharing positive personal youth accounts (113-116) and he suggested that he can empathise through shared youth experiences; "I know how they're feeling" (191-192). Jack perceives the youth-led approach as compensating for the council's limitations as council staff "can't go out on the streets every day and talk" (68-69). Additionally, Jack described YA members as holders of insider knowledge given their status as youth residents in the community; "we know what is going on" (36-37).

Jack is in favour of the preventative work offered by YA, stating that "prevention is always better than cure" (1031-1032). In particular, he highlighted the cumulative gains achieved from YA preventative training to reduce youth gang involvement (922-930). Jack also described his own YA involvement as a preventative intervention in itself; "if there is gangs and everything else, I'm preventing myself from being in there by making a positive change in the borough" (1047-1050).

Jack identified the "one-to-one and face-to-face interaction" (62-63) between YA members and youths in the community as "pivotal" (66) in the success of the role. Jack believes that "young people are more about" (103) receiving and sharing information through human interaction, "instead of just somebody writing it on the computer" (121-122). He believes that "word of mouth reaches a lot" (930).

4.3.5 Challenges in Role

Jack cited difficulties arising during street work. He reported that he has "friends who are in gangs" (986-987) which can pose safety risks; "for the safety of others, I wouldn't take my team into a place which my friend has a situation with" (900-902). Jack also explained that some youths can be "hostile" (141) or "fragile" (142) in terms of not wanting to engage

(145).

Jack described a lack of clarity in the community regarding the YA position in relation to the council. He reported that his friends initially assumed that he was "part of the council as an informant" (1492-1493).

Jack referenced difficulties in some youth-adult community collaborations. He lamented a reliance on adult stakeholders to achieve community change and an unequal power balance in community decision-making, explaining "at the end of the day, it's up to them to make the decision" (1216-1217). Furthermore, Jack described a fracturing of trust in some youth-adult collaborative relationships citing as his "worst experience" (1246) an occasion "when councillors didn't turn up to a meeting" (1247-1248), perceiving that "they just didn't care" (1256-1257). Jack described a pattern of such disappointments, feeling "like we're just left on the cusp of the same old changes but nothing's gonna actually change cause we didn't get through to actually talking about anything" (1299-1303). Jack believes that youth time is under-valued by some adult stakeholders and he has felt "disregarded" (1239) and "not taken as serious" (1175-1176) at some meetings "without our manager being there" (1190-1191).

4.3.6 Factors Contributing to Continued Involvement

Jack perceives there to be an abundance of interesting activities and opportunities offered through YA, describing each month "like a lottery". He reported his enjoyment in the YA role, including his delight in obtaining the Deputy Youth Mayor position (1082-1084). Jack appreciates that there is a strong purpose to YA work, noting "we're not just coming for no reason" (812).

Regarding intrinsic factors, Jack reported that YA gives him a "sense of belonging" within his community (1071). He values the recognition offered to YA members (808-810), explaining that "it feels good" (827) to be "young and be listened to" (828). Jack described a

sense of pride and "gratification" (887) in his achievements and contributions towards positive community change.

Jack reported that he was initially "incentivised" (378) to join YA by the financial gain. Although his intrinsic motivation soon developed, Jack was also encouraged by organisational supports such as the stability and "structure" (1332) offered by YA, knowing "that each month, once in a month, I'm going to go and possibly sign up for work" (1334-1336).

The views and behaviours of others also act to reinforce Jack's involvement. His family are "proud" (1482) of his achievements and his friends view him to be in a position of "authority" (1510). Jack perceives that community members see him as knowledgeable about local matters (1502-1504) and he has attained status and respect (1593) through his YA involvement, recognised as someone who is "doing good" (1595) for the community. Jack enjoys "leaving a good impression" on others (1160-1161), explaining that it gives him "a very good feeling" (1168).

The power offered by the YA role also motivates Jack. He believes that YA members are viewed as youth experts, with their contribution valued by local stakeholders (599-602). Facilitated by the platform offered by YA, Jack feels that he has "got a say in this" (250) borough.

Jack is motivated to address particular community issues. He is passionate about developing his community area (698-711) as he feels that this section of the borough is neglected (712-717). Jack feels that there is a lack of opportunities (1665-1668) and amenities (617-621) for youths in the borough. Lastly, Jack raised the issue of safety in the borough, explaining the personal importance of making sure that the borough is safe for its residents (1428-1429).

4.4 Chloe's Conceptualisations and Lived Experiences

4.4.1 Conceptualisation of the YA Role

Chloe described a variety of activities within the YA role, from providing the youth perspective in community development projects (921-933) to gathering information from community members to contribute to community change efforts (743-751). According to Chloe, YA work often focuses on tackling "social issues" in the borough.

Chloe explained that YA work promotes change for individuals within the community through, for example, campaigns to increase civic engagement and community participation amongst residents (27-34). YA also affects change at a systemic level by influencing "policies, procedures" (286-287) and local service delivery (699-702) through work with "schools" (728) and "the police" (701). Furthermore, Chloe explained that she is a trustee on the board of the YA national charity and as such, is "having an impact on the wider kind of like function of the charity" (336-337).

Chloe conceives the YA role to be youth-led as members are free to "sign up" for various projects, choosing work dependant "on what's important to you" (731-732). She also highlighted the flexibility afforded in the role, particularly when members are required to reduce their involvement due to competing demands on their time (1122-1124).

4.4.2 YA and the Construct of Self

Concerning her journey into YA, Chloe alluded to her own family experiences of economic and social disadvantage as an immigrant "living with my parents in like one bedroom when we first moved here" (166-169), and her parents having to "start from zero" (173-174) despite having "two masters" (175-176).

Chloe identified several ways that YA has impacted on her self-view. Chloe re-evaluated her capabilities as a result of her YA involvement (1266-1268); she now feels more confident (684-686), "smarter" (880), "empowered and valued" (873-874), as a result of her

experiences. She believes that YA has increased her visibility in the community (1242-1245). Chloe found it hard to contemplate how different her life would be had she not joined YA (1124-1132).

Chloe expressed an ongoing commitment to YA, stating her intention to remain involved until she reaches the age limit of 25 (1616-1617). Although her ambition is to become a lawyer (281-283), Chloe is keen to continue engaging in social justice work and helping others in the long-term through "pro bono projects" (1647).

4.4.3 Personal Growth Through YA Work

Chloe attributed YA with developing her skills and knowledge in a range of areas. She explained that she has developed team management (1057-1071), organisational and time management skills (1189-1207), along with community understanding (1295-1298), and familiarity with corporate structures (351-358). Chloe has become more "diplomatic" (141), learning "how to handle" (594) challenging situations. She believes that she has become more resilient (1153-1154) and empathetic (132-135). Chloe also described gains in her communication and public speaking skills (1124-1133), along with her ability to interact with others and read social situations (569-576).

Chloe described YA as a "professional environment" (238) and she reported that the skills she has developed there have helped her to excel at "university" (1141) and "law school" (293). Chloe feels that the skills and training acquired through YA have also enhanced her CV and developed her future employability (1068-1077). Chloe believes that the experiences offered through YA make it "a good steppingstone" (283) to a career in law.

Chloe greatly values the relationships she has built through YA. She enjoys "working with people from different backgrounds" (112-113) and the opportunity to develop friendships with people outside of her normal social circle (998-1007). Chloe described YA as a supportive peer network, explaining "when I was applying for like university or when I was going through

law school, I was able to like go to people who, you know, were going, who had already been through that process" (1007-1011). Finally, Chloe reported that she has been able to develop connections to local authority figures, such as "councillors" (1236), through her YA work.

4.4.4 Factors Attributed to the Effectiveness of the Role

Chloe highlighted the YA approach of directly engaging with community members as an important factor contributing to the success of the role "because then when you do go into these sort of focus groups and scrutiny meetings, it makes it a lot easier to reflect" (511-513) the views of community members.

Chloe also identified the "support system" (669) within YA as helpful. She described the YA manager as supportive (1115-1117) and accessible (650-656). Chloe finds the policy of YA members working in pairs or groups "makes it better" (662) and "a lot safer" (663) to fulfil the role. Similarly, she feels that having specific YA lanyards and clothing "makes it easier to go out into the public" (533-534) as it offers some "authority" (529) and "makes it a bit more official" (532-533).

4.4.5 Challenges in Role

Chloe recalled incidents when she felt tokenised and not treated as a true project partner in youth-adult community collaborations; she explained that agencies sometimes invite a youth representative onto projects as "a tick box exercise" (861) and "your feedback isn't necessarily taken on board" (1038-1039).

At an organisational level, Chloe cited a lack of cohesion between YA franchises, particularly at regional levels. She believes that there is a disconnect between YA groups in the north and south of the country (1599-1603), postulating that young people might experience quite different issues between the two regions (1596-1598). Nevertheless, Chloe reported that she "would love to see sort of more national work that would then have like a bigger impact on sort of young people across the country" (1605-1607).

Chloe suggested that there is a lack of understanding in the community regarding the YA role and positioning in relation to the council, explaining that her friends were "really confused" (1171-1172), believing her to work for the council. Chloe also indicated that there is some responsibility inherent in the YA role given the links to the council, explaining "you have to be careful with what you say" (627-628) as "you're representing the council" (595).

4.4.6 Factors Contributing to Continued Involvement

Enjoyment in the YA role and activities is one factor motivating Chloe's continued involvement; she used very positive language describing the various activities (73; 311-312). Chloe appreciates the range of interesting and worthwhile projects offered through YA (309-310). The youth-led nature of the role has also kept her engaged as she said, "there's only so many charities that accepts sort of young people on their board" (327-329).

Intrinsic motivators include Chloe's innate curiosity in learning about the experiences of others (179-191). Chloe is socially motivated; she enjoys "going out and talking to people" (391-392) and values the diverse connections and friendships formed through YA (995- 1007). Additionally, Chloe feels successful in her YA role (67-73) and she is proud of her achievements (324-325).

Chloe also values YA as an "income resource" (389).

The views and behaviours of others similarly play a motivating role. Chloe believes that other people are impressed by her YA involvement (1178-1180). She reported that her family are "really proud" (1164) of her work and her friends are "intrigued" (1166) by it. Furthermore, Chloe generally feels "valued" by local stakeholders with whom she has worked, perceiving that her opinion "matters" (1279).

Chloe is motivated to tackle specific community issues. She raised the issues of "knife crime" (1339), "harassment on the street towards women" (1444-1445), and lack of safety in the borough (1428-1439). She highlighted "gentrification" (1321), rising house prices (1306-

1308), “poverty” (1337), and unequal distribution of community resources (1481-1492). Chloe also feels that there is a lack of amenities for youths in the borough (718-720), along with a paucity of employment opportunities (382-386). She perceives that young people are often neglected in community development (799-808).

4.5 Joshua’s Conceptualisations and Lived Experiences

4.5.1 Conceptualisation of the YA Role

Joshua also conceptualised the YA role as varied with “a lot of different things” (19) to do. He explained that YA activities can range from gathering community views through survey administration (589-591) to sitting on a judging panel for applicants to “artistic redevelopment schemes” (523). According to Joshua, YA members tend to provide the youth perspective at council meetings (512-514) and scrutinies where “they essentially discuss and scrutinise the different projects that are happening” (75-76) in the borough.

Joshua explained that YA members affect multi-level change in the community. At an individual level, they directly engage with community members, “talking to them, finding out how they feel” (887-888), endeavouring to “help them as much as we can” (323). At a systemic level, YA members promote youth mental health (111-114), work on the “climate emergency” (43-49), and influence changes to community service delivery in schools (1057-1060), police (542-550) and local mental health services (117-122).

According to Joshua, YA is predominantly youth-led, with the YA manager as the only adult “over 25” (226); he explained that youths are in positions of power and influence within the organisation (235-238). Joshua described YA as a casual and informal work environment (210-211), with members allowed the flexibility to “choose what sort of things we want to do” (217-218) and “work around our timetables” (218-219).

4.5.2 YA and the Construct of Self

Joshua reported previous involvement in peer support roles at school before YA

involvement (102-103). According to Joshua, “I’ve always just wanted to help where I can” (357-358) and he has a history of being civic-minded, “always had sort of like ideas and stuff about what’s wrong in the community and what needs to be fixed” (744-746). Joshua recounted “a couple” (179) of incidents when he was attacked on his street, explaining that this “sort of acts as a sort of encouragement to try and help change things” (187-189).

Through his YA involvement, Joshua has developed an embedded view of himself as a helper of others (1046-1048). He perceives that his YA experiences have “enriched” (739) his “character” (740) and “given me a greater depth” (740-741). Joshua now views himself as “a voice for the council” (953) and an agent of community change (275-278).

Joshua hopes to become an artist in the future (1250-1254). However, he also expressed a long-term commitment to YA and social justice (1260-1266). Joshua envisions himself engaging in further community development work in the future, alongside his art career (1301-1314).

4.5.3 Personal Growth Through YA Work

According to Joshua, YA has pushed him out of his comfort zone, helping him to develop and realise his capabilities (645-658). Joshua described himself as “shy” (623) when joining YA. However, he feels that YA has helped him to “build confidence” (675) and to overcome his “difficulties in communicating with other people” (637-638). Joshua also believes that his involvement has helped him to foster “empathy” (761) for others and to reduce his “biases” (1026) and “preconceived ideas” (1025). Joshua perceives that he has developed his community understanding (1016-1019) and local area knowledge (1006-1007), along with his familiarity with community change processes (743-751).

Joshua believes that YA will aid his future career prospects in several ways. He suggested that he is producing better art as a result of his YA experiences (757-758). Joshua also believes that YA is a good pathway to working within the council (1289-1293). He

suggested that he is gaining relevant “experience” (1319) and forming “strong connections” (1284-1285) that he hopes might help him to obtain more work in the future (1341).

Joshua believes that his relationships have benefitted from his YA involvement. He described feeling a greater “sense of community” (380) and he has developed more trust and compassion towards community decision-makers, believing that they are “trying to do their best” (1120). Finally, Joshua has forged connections with YA members coming from diverse backgrounds (161-165).

4.5.4 Factors Attributed to the Effectiveness of the Role

Joshua identified the youth-led approach of YA as one factor contributing to the effectiveness of the role. He referred to research showing that youth involvement in community decisions that affect them leads to better outcomes (140-148). He also suggested that YA members can compensate for limitations in adult stakeholders’ understanding of the zeitgeist and youth culture; “even if it has only been five, 10 years since they were sort of a young person... there’s still been massive changes with technology and sort of the ways that we work as a society” (260-266).

Joshua also identified the power situated within the YA role as contributing towards its effectiveness. He described YA members as having insider positioning as “a youth voice within the council” (23), perceiving that members can influence council-level decisions “particularly in the meetings” (249) they attend. According to Joshua, YA also offers young people a platform to exercise critical voice in community service delivery (559-563).

4.5.5 Challenges in Role

Joshua cited difficulties arising during community engagement activities such as feeling cold and “miserable” (704) when working outdoors in poor weather conditions (705- 710).

With regards to youth-adult community collaborations, Joshua described challenges understanding the technical language used during council meetings, explaining “sometimes a

lot of it just sort of goes over my head" (683-684). Joshua also said that he sometimes has difficulty speaking up to contribute at meetings (671-675), feeling intimidated talking to authority figures (617-621), and not always feeling like "I have something to add" (680). In this regard, he finds it helpful to remind himself that "any input is sort of valid because it's sort of the young person's view and that's what they need to hear" (628-632). He also appreciates the support from adult allies who facilitate youth contributions at meetings, who "make sure that we have an opportunity to speak" (677-678).

Concerning outcomes and ideas generated at community meetings, Joshua cautioned that "they might get diluted and sort of changed and warped" (317-319) over time, particularly given the very gradual nature of community change (1209-1212). Also related to time, Joshua cited difficulties balancing his YA work with "uni stuff" (1269) and "other priorities" (1273).

Joshua suggested that there are misconceptions in the community about the YA role; in particular, he believes that his friends do not "realise just sort of what it means" (991). He believes that it would be helpful to raise community awareness "of what we're doing" (1241), suggesting that this could help to further develop YA as a liaison between the council and the community (1230-1237).

4.5.6 Factors Contributing to Continued Involvement

Joshua enjoys the "variety of work" (408-409) at YA, finding it to be "really interesting" (526) and engaging (1316-1317). He particularly enjoys learning about the systemic workings of the borough and he values the social aspect of the work, directly engaging with community members (602-607).

Joshua appears to be primarily driven by intrinsic factors to help others in his community (128-134). He is very aware of his own "privilege" (343), describing a moral obligation to support others less fortunate (339-340). He reported that it "feels good just

to give back" (341-342) and to "see the positive impacts that we're having" (1150-11510). Joshua also feels empowered by having "an input" (391) into the workings of the borough and he values the opportunity to build his "confidence" (641).

Joshua emphasised that his engagement with YA work is "not for recognition" (1243) from others. However, he conceded that his family are supportive and "really interested" (976) in his work.

Joshua also identified YA as a good income resource (734-735).

Finally, Joshua is motivated to tackle particular community problems. These include "youth mental health" (1176), "LGBT issues" (169), and work related to "children and families" (81). He is keen to reduce violent crime and to make the borough safer for residents (1171-1172). Joshua highlighted the issues of "poverty" (783) and "homelessness" (814), and he believes that there are a "lack of opportunities" (848) and "services" (850) for youths in the borough. He also identified "climate change" (783) as an issue that needs "fixing" (781).

4.6 Megan's Conceptualisations and Lived Experiences

4.6.1 Conceptualisation of the YA Role

Megan similarly commented on the "variety of different things you can do" (407-408) through the YA role, ranging from delivery of peer education on the climate emergency (564-565) and engaging with youths to address crime in the borough (356-359), to gathering community views and analysing data to inform future change efforts (69-74).

Megan gave examples of YA promoting change for individuals in the community such as offering support to youths to set up their own businesses (865-870) and facilitating them to develop their interests and hobbies (40-61). According to Megan, YA members also affect systemic change through, for example, working collaboratively with youths from other boroughs at the London Youth Assembly to address community issues across London (101-110).

Megan conceptualised the YA role as flexible and youth-led as she is free to "sign up for whatever jobs I wanna do" (8-9) and young people are in positions of power and influence within the organisation (138-140).

4.6.2 YA and the Construct of Self

According to Megan, she felt "marginalised" (128) and powerless to affect community change before YA involvement, perceiving that "adults have the power" (1331-1332). She was also anxious (829-833), lacking confidence (653-656) and struggling to communicate (919-922), believing that her community participation and future life choices were inhibited as a result of these difficulties (1200-1204).

Nevertheless, Megan had an ingrained inclination to help others (649-651) and a history of involvement in peer support roles at school (1030-1036). Megan described herself as "passionate" (341) about social change, and after hearing about YA from a teacher at school (276-281), she recognised it as "a chance for me to actually try to see what I can do to make a change" (220-221).

Through her YA involvement, Megan now views herself to be "more open" (1301), and insightful (229-230). She perceives herself to be a positive role model for others (1247-1253). Megan also believes that YA has "helped" (549) her "mentally and emotionally" (1209), serving to keep her "proactive" (1305).

Megan plans to remain involved with YA (1497-1498). In the long-term future, she envisions herself being "successful" (1485) in a role "helping people" (1489) such as "a solicitor or a midwife" (1487-1488).

4.6.3 Personal Growth Through YA Work

According to Megan, YA "gives young people an opportunity to get out of their comfort zone, do things that they never thought they'll be doing" (637-640). Accordingly, YA has developed Megan's self-efficacy, supporting her to realise her capabilities (1205-1209).

Megan attributes YA with developing her "communication skills" (526), "confidence" (659), and resilience (823-835). As a result, she is now more actively involved in her local community (229-232).

Megan reported that these new skills have been transferred to other areas, particularly at school where she now participates more in class (546-549). Similarly, "after seeing that I could actually do this and I could actually get into a job" (1205-1206), she now has the confidence to pursue future career options.

From a relationship perspective, Megan explained that she has established social connections through YA (757-767).

4.6.4 Factors Attributed to the Effectiveness of the Role

Megan identified the preventative approach of YA as helping its members. For example, she attributed YA training with ensuring that members can maintain their safety during street engagement work (1384-1386). She also conceives YA membership as a preventative measure for young people at risk of criminal activity, explaining that YA offers an alternative source of income (1453-1456), along with more positive social outlets (1449- 1453).

Megan believes that the approach of directly engaging with community members during street work allows for the development of rapport, increasing the openness of target youths to intervention (897-899). She explained that the goal is to "engage in conversation, and as a result of that they may ask us questions about like the work that we're doing. And then we can get them, um, we can refer them to us, or whatever they wanna be referred to" (1388-1393).

From an organisational perspective, Megan lauded the inclusivity and diversity of YA membership, explaining that "there's a lot of people from different backgrounds" (663-664) which "has definitely helped a lot of people" (669-700); she explained that YA "has encouraged people to share like, "You know what? Your past doesn't define your future [] You can't change your past, but you can change the way you are moving forward"" (684- 689).

Megan also described YA as a supportive work setting, explaining "they don't force me to do things that I don't feel comfortable doing" (835-836) and she described the YA manager as facilitating a variety of work and opportunities for members, ensuring that "a lot of doors have been opened for young people" (516-517).

Finally, Megan referred to the mechanism of YA enabling young people to hold adult authority figures to account, albeit in a respectful manner (136-153). She suggested that YA offers young people "a voice" (400).

4.6.5 Challenges in Role

Concerning challenges, Megan cited difficulties arising during street work in the community. She explained that some youths are reluctant to engage, and receiving negative responses from others can impact her emotionally (1150-1159). Perhaps unsurprisingly, Megan can feel apprehensive before engaging in street work (823-835). She also finds it hard to motivate herself to go out in poor weather conditions (1167-1172). Megan endeavours to stay "positive" (1132) and "professional" (1144) when receiving negative responses, and she finds it helpful to initially evaluate individuals' "body language" (1116) to ascertain their openness to engagement.

Time also emerged as a theme in Megan's perceived challenges in the role. She referred to difficulties balancing YA work with other competing demands on her time; "because I have a lot of exams, I can't really give it as much time as I want to give" (1180- 1182). She also suggested that effective community change requires "a lot of time and effort, [and] patience" (1417-1418).

4.6.6 Factors Contributing to Continued Involvement

The quality of the YA work is one factor contributing to Megan's ongoing involvement. Megan described "the different opportunities" (795) afforded to her through YA as "the best thing" (799) about the role. According to Megan, her YA experiences have been

overwhelmingly positive (1113).

Concerning within-person motivators, Megan “feels good” (536) about the positive changes she views in herself as a result of her YA experiences. She also described a feel-good factor in helping others and bringing them enjoyment; “when I saw that we were actually doing something for young children, the way like they were happy running around so carefree, that made me really happy” (816-820). Megan also feels effective (161-162) and takes “pride” (647) in her role.

The views and behaviours of others similarly act as motivating Megan’s ongoing involvement. She reported that her YA work is viewed positively by her family (1227-1234), friends (1247-1270), and teachers at school (1282-1286). Within her YA role, Megan has also received positive feedback from adult stakeholders (156-162), and other YA members (300-301).

Megan described the financial reimbursement for YA work as an added bonus (347-349).

The power invested in the YA role also acts as motivating her involvement. Megan values that YA has given her “a voice” and allowed her a platform and mechanism “to make a change” (221) in her community.

Megan is motivated to tackle particular community issues. She is worried about the lack of safety in her community (256-258), citing “knife crime” (211-212) and “gang crime” (1354) as particular problems. Megan fears for the safety of loved ones (1477-1481), believing young males to be at increased risk (247-253). Megan is also concerned about youth mental health (1031-1036) and marginalisation (126-129), believing that “the needs of young people tends to be overlooked” (394-396). She suggested that there is a paucity of jobs for youths in the borough, along with a lack of awareness of opportunities and help available to them (1430-1433). Finally, Megan wishes to “raise awareness on the climate emergency” (75-76).

4.7 Emily's Conceptualisations and Lived Experiences

4.7.1 Conceptualisation of the YA Role

Emily also conceptualised the YA role as varied, explaining that she is "involved in different things" (6) ranging from the "Youth Mayor's Team" (280-281) and holding a position as a "Young Mental Health Ambassador" (8-9), to offering the youth perspective at community meetings and consultations with local agencies (18-25).

According to Emily, YA serves to promote change at an individual-level by "getting young people into politics" (290), enabling them to become "involved in activities in the area" (43-44), and by informing them "about things that are happening" (451-452). Emily also gave an example of YA contributing to systemic change in the community by giving input into the development of mental health resources for young people (32-33).

Additionally, Emily described the YA role as "flexible" (850), youth-led and non-directive, in that the work "is about young people in the borough" (1114-1115) and it follows their lead; "if a young person doesn't wanna participate, don't force them" (76-77).

4.7.2 YA and the Construct of Self

Emily recounted negative experiences that she had with the council (118-120) and with the police (638-657) before YA involvement. Before joining YA, Emily perceived her friends as "bad" (738) influences and she previously lived in a borough where "there was a lot of crime" (384-385). According to Emily, she has experienced "a lot of injustices" (122- 123) and "inequality" (130), and "from a child, I've always been passionate about justice, social change, and people's rights" (109-114).

Emily reported that YA involvement "changed me" (698). She believes that she now embraces opportunities more (716-721). YA has also developed her self-awareness (681- 682); it has made her realise "how much I like working with people" (917-918) and "how much I do like community work" (709-710).

Emily plans to remain involved with YA until she reaches the age limit (1069-1078). In the future, she envisions herself having her own successful business (1026-1027). However, she also expressed a long-term commitment to "community work" (1029) and to supporting "young people" (1031).

4.7.3 Personal Growth Through YA Work

Emily attributed YA with developing her team working (714-715) and interpersonal skills, reporting "I've learned how to engage with people" (716). She also explained that YA has equipped her with skills "to deal with people that make assumptions about you". Furthermore, Emily believes that YA has developed her understanding of her community (702-703), including "the issues that we're facing" (954).

Concerning future career prospects, Emily attributes YA with developing her entrepreneurial skills (467-477) and she reported that she has learned "how to navigate through a work environment" (684-685).

Emily is grateful for meeting "other young people" (268-269) and establishing good friends through YA (725). Additionally, she reported that she has developed "contacts in the council" (1053) which she hopes will help her to become involved in future community work.

4.7.4 Factors Attributed to the Effectiveness of the Role

Emily identified the youth-led approach of YA as one factor contributing to the effectiveness of the role, as the organisation offers young people opportunities to engage in some community decision-making (224-227).

The training offered by YA was also identified as aiding role delivery and preventing issues arising, specifically "safeguarding training [and being] taught how to approach young people, what to do in certain scenarios" (71-74).

Emily is also grateful for the encouragement and support she receives from her friends at YA (748-754).

Finally, Emily alluded to the power situated within the YA role. She characterised YA as a chance for youths "to change things and make things better" (157-158). She explained that "organisations" (20) approach YA to get the youth "perspective" (21) and she generally feels that her voice is listened to in these contexts (882-890). Emily also believes that YA gives her "access to opportunities that other young people might not have access to" (448- 449).

4.7.5 Challenges in Role

Emily identified some difficulties arising in youth-adult community collaborations. She indicated a lack of trust in adult stakeholders, suggesting that "responsibility is left on [young people] to basically improve our situation" (106-107).

Emily believes that there is a lack of understanding in the community regarding the YA role, reporting that community members "really don't know what it is" (902-903).

Emily also described fluctuations in the amount of YA work available from month to month, explaining that some months there is "not a lot of work going" (858). Emily perceives that there can sometimes be a lack of transparency or miscommunication when allocating YA work, stating "I just feel like it's a bit unequal sometimes, or I'm not aware of certain things that are happening" (777-779). Furthermore, Emily feels frustrated by inadequate communication, perceived "hierarchy" (540), and feeling like an unequal partner, in some YA team projects (405-420).

Emily lamented perceived limitations in the power of the YA role. She had expected YA members "to be very influential" (172) and "to actively do more in the community" (204). However, she was "disappointed" (193) to learn that the role was "not the way I imagined" (182). Due to these limitations, Emily believes that YA members can only go so far (260-261) and "may not be able to fully fulfil their potential within that position" (257- 258). She is seeking more YA influence in community decision-making (220-223).

Finally, Emily raised some relationship difficulties within YA. She reported difficulty

working with some YA members (555-562), perceiving that certain people “don’t like” (556) her or “don’t listen” (430) to her contributions. Consequently, she is reluctant to engage with some YA members (560-562). However, she does find it helpful to talk to people to address team working problems (421-426).

4.7.6 Factors Contributing to Continued Involvement

Despite the challenges outlined above, Emily has found YA work to be enjoyable (792) and “a good experience” (1088) overall. In particular, she described consultations as “interesting” (527) and “fun to be in” (528). She also highlighted a fun day event for children in care as one of her favourite activities (495-507), particularly valuing the opportunity to talk to young people “and listening to their experiences” (513-514). Emily appreciates the flexibility offered by the YA role (850-852) and values “being able to access other opportunities” (1088-1089) through YA.

Concerning within-person factors, Emily described herself as “passionate about social change” (135), suggesting that “this is the type of work that I would do even if I didn’t get paid to do it” (97-99). Emily described her own experiences of “injustices” (123) and “inequality” (131) as motivating her social action (124-126). Additionally, Emily placed great value on the friendships formed through YA (721-728), reporting “I’m proud of my friends” (739) and “I enjoy their company” (741). Despite the difficulties outlined above, Emily reported: “I like the people that I work with” (789-790) at YA.

Emily perceives herself to be viewed more positively by others due to her YA involvement, explaining “they just look at me like I’m, like I’ve achieved a lot, I’m doing something good” (897-898). She believes that her family are proud (828-829) and her friends look up to her YA role; “they just see it as a very high up position for my age” (836-837).

Emily described the financial reimbursement for YA work as a “bonus” (95).

Emily is motivated to address several community issues. She is seeking more opportunities for young people and other community members (327-330) and she believes that there is a need to raise community awareness about opportunities already available (961-963). Emily believes that young people can be marginalised at times, complaining that "people don't take you seriously" (671-672), and she feels that youths in the community are "disconnected" (605) from "politics" (601) and "the council" (602). Emily is seeking more opportunities for community members to become civically engaged (360-373) and she wishes to develop communication "between the community and the council" (964-965). Emily also raised concerns about "homelessness" (322) and the "shortage of houses" (1121) in the borough. She is concerned that there is "a high crime rate" (347), along with "a bad relationship between the police and young people" (353-354).

4.8 Charlotte's Conceptualisations and Lived Experiences

4.8.1 Conceptualisation of the YA Role

Charlotte similarly described the YA role as varied, explaining "you can do literally everything and anything" (12-14). Her work with YA has ranged from delivering training to MPs, councillors, and professionals in the criminal justice system, on how to speak to young people (710-715), to speaking at conferences (1240-1273) and delivering workshops to students in schools on "violence against women and girls" (1133). Charlotte explained that she has taken on a leadership role within YA, becoming Coordinator of Streetbase youth engagement service (4-5).

According to Charlotte, YA is promoting change for individuals in the community by building and maintaining genuine relationships with vulnerable youths (1410-1431), signposting them to recreational and vocational opportunities based on their interests (1405-1408). Meanwhile, YA members affect systemic change by sitting on boards within the council, advocating for youths and influencing decisions that impact them in the borough (1675-1687).

Charlotte conceptualised the YA role as youth-led (1018-1030), with members allowed autonomy and creative freedom when developing and delivering training (960-971), for example. Charlotte also described YA as flexible (7-9), explaining that "you can build on it or like, pull back from the role as much, as often as you want to" (7-9).

4.8.2 YA and the Construct of Self

Charlotte identified herself as coming "from a working-class background" (359). She explained that she was drawn to YA by "the opportunity to talk" (105), describing herself as a "chatterbox" (107) who loves to "argue and debate" (200).

Charlotte perceives YA as having had a very "positive impact" (2043) on her and she believes that this impact will continue "to benefit me long-term" (1948). Charlotte feels empowered through her YA experiences (415-427), attributing her participation with making her realise her capabilities (419-423). Charlotte also views herself as privileged in her YA position (423-424), having been exposed to a wealth of opportunities. She attributes YA with helping her to develop a "reputation" (755) within the council and she believes that "I wouldn't be anywhere near as happy and as successful as I am [] if it wasn't for Young Advisors" (685-688).

YA is very important to Charlotte's sense of self and her identity (685-690). She is apprehensive about her transition out of YA (788-792) and she is keen to raise the upper age limit further (2105-2111).

Charlotte expressed a long term commitment to YA (678-690). In the future, she hopes to become a "councillor" (2125) in her local community.

4.8.3 Personal Growth Through YA Work

Charlotte feels that she has developed a range of skills and competencies through YA training and experiences. She believes herself to be more focused (2009-2013) and "professional" (1885), and a more "confident and proud mum" (237), as a result of her YA

involvement. Charlotte has developed her "communication skills" (434), including her public speaking and "presentation skills" (1896). She has acquired skills in "community action" (436-437) and civic engagement (376-423). She has learned how to recognise tokenism and how to challenge it in a professional manner (454-459). Charlotte has developed more "understanding" (1804) and empathy for others' experiences (1887-1908), making fewer assumptions and pre-judgments about others (1906-1908). She has also become more diplomatic (2047-2087). YA has developed Charlotte's "team working skills" (433), her patience (1887-1908), and her ability to interact with people of all ages (1985-1993).

Charlotte conceives YA as equipping members with skills for adult life (545-547). She attributed her YA experience with helping to secure her place at a top Sixth Form college (169-176), along with work experience placements at prestigious law firms (202-228). Charlotte attributed her YA experience with informing her decision to pursue a future career path as "a councillor" (373) and giving her the "confidence" (419) to do so. She explained that she has established "incredible" (1240) contacts through YA, being offered mentorships (1231-1240) and future work opportunities (1335-1344).

Charlotte is grateful for the impact of YA on her relationships, explaining that she has met "the most amazing people" (1952) through YA. She described YA members as a supportive peer network, reporting that she regularly seeks parenting advice from a previous YA member (1963-1972). Charlotte values the "really good friends" (1977) she has made through YA, including those who have become her "daughter's godfathers and uncles" (843). Charlotte also enjoys a close relationship with the YA manager (1030-1051). Furthermore, Charlotte reported that she has developed "connections" (420) within the council and with adults in other powerful positions in the community (1224-1240).

4.8.4 Factors Attributed to the Effectiveness of the YA role

Charlotte identified the youth-led approach of YA as one factor contributing to the

effectiveness of the role. She suggested that YA members can "speak from our own experiences" (1756) as young people in the community and use insider knowledge to target "hotspot areas" (1393) for youth engagement activities. Furthermore, Charlotte believes that the peer-to-peer model of YA allows youth recipients of their services to feel a commonality or "bondage that they wouldn't receive from a police officer or off their mentors or whatever it is" (1428-1431).

Charlotte also feels that the approach of YA directly engaging with community members is influential in the success of the role. She explained that there is a focus on "quality engagements" (1438) and "genuine one-on-one conversations" (1451-1452), with the aim to foster lasting relationships "with these young people" (1413).

Charlotte described YA as providing a structured and effective mechanism for "challengin' professionals in a, in a respectable manner" (1924-1925), leading to more "favourable" (1932) outcomes for all involved. She suggested that there is a high retention rate (623-636), along with diversity within YA membership, leading to better representation of the diverse views and experiences in the community; she explained that there are "Young Advisor trained individuals who's in care, left care, are young carers themselves, who's been in prison, [or] who's like, literally young parents, myself" (1637-1641). Charlotte identified the YA manager as facilitating members in their delivery of youth-led services (972-984), advocating to ensure that outside agencies honour the authentic youth voice during youth-adult community collaborations (1002-1007). Charlotte also described the YA manager as "very understanding" (525), accommodating members' individual needs and allocating work based on their interests (525-539).

Charlotte referred to the peer-to-peer support within YA as enabling role delivery, explaining that her YA colleagues have "kept me very level-headed and focused" (2006-2007). She reported that there is a focus on "team-building" (48) within YA, "working on

each other's strengths" (51); "you're never really like, doing things by yourself" (38-39). Concerning her leadership role within YA, Charlotte reported that she ensures to thank YA peers for their hard work (1467-1469) and she recalled treating her team to hot drinks when working outdoors on a cold day (1464-1467).

Charlotte believes that the power situated within the YA role also facilitates its effectiveness. She suggested that the YA model provides a platform for members to advocate for youths in the community (1840-1850). According to Charlotte, YA members are recognised as the "go-to people for, whenever someone wants to engage or understand young people" (1628-1629). She feels that YA members are "listened to" (1832) and respected by community stakeholders (1832-1835), portraying them as heavily involved in local "decision-making" (1634).

4.8.5 Challenges in Role

Charlotte described some difficulties in youth-adult community collaborations, suggesting that the authentic youth voice is at risk of being "restricted" (987) or compromised when collaborating with outside agencies (989-990). According to Charlotte, there is also a risk of token engagement, when difficult personal accounts shared by youths at conferences are viewed by adult attendees as "just a story to listen to" (1810-1811); in this regard, Charlotte warns that it is "hard to pour truth" (1832).

Charlotte cited a dependency on funding from the YA national charity as impacting the amount of work available, recalling a period when "the national charity was kind of going downhill, and there weren't really much commissions, much work comin' in" (624-626). Similarly, Charlotte explained that funding restrictions within external agencies who typically commission YA work can impact on YA work availability (895-906). However, Charlotte suggested that the YA positioning in relation to the council can act as a buffer in such incidences, given that "we're a part of the council" (648-649), and as such, often receive paid

work from “council people or organisations” (649-650).

Charlotte also alluded to experiencing some relationship difficulties within YA, specifically “working with those that I don’t necessarily get along with” (2084-2085).

Finally, time emerged as a theme in the challenges identified by Charlotte. She explained that competing demands on time can reduce the availability of YA members, particularly “when there’s a huge cohort of people going up to university” (58-59). Similarly, she reported that YA members sometimes miss training for specific roles and then “have to wait to be trained up” (663) before taking up such positions; therefore, Charlotte highlighted the importance of members keeping up-to-date with YA correspondence to avoid losing out on training and other opportunities (666-670).

4.8.6 Factors Contributing to Continued Involvement

Charlotte portrayed her YA involvement as an overwhelmingly positive experience (600-602), describing “fun” (1322) and enjoyment (856-857) in the role. Charlotte particularly values the team working element of YA work (705-708), along with her position as Streetbase Coordinator (1324). She also enjoys looking at community “issues and how to solve them” (450-451).

Charlotte described many intrinsic motivators keeping her involved. She appreciates the self-development aspect of the work, describing it as “the best feeling because it just helps you progress and prepares you for when you’re, you’re finished Young Advisors” (545-547). Charlotte feels empowered through her YA activities, feeling like “an equal” (724) to councillors and other adults in positions of power and influence. She values the opportunities to advocate on behalf of others, describing such experiences as “incredible” (1764). She feels successful and “really proud” (1739-1740) of the positive impact that she is having on her local community (2094-2098).

Charlotte is also influenced by the views and behaviours of others. She reported that her

family are supportive of her YA involvement (150-154). Charlotte also values "the appreciation and respect" (789) she receives within YA, along with the praise and positive feedback from community stakeholders regarding her work (1273-1275). Charlotte believes that YA members are viewed by others as "proactive in their community" (1585), "someone that's positive and someone that's quite intelligent as well" (1595-1597).

Charlotte reported that she was initially motivated by the financial reimbursement for YA work (700-705), although her intrinsic motivation developed once in the role. Charlotte also described the "flexible hours" (512) of YA working as a major bonus, particularly given her parenting duties (1168-1181). The support received from her YA manager also acts as reinforcing her continued involvement (515-520).

The power inherent in the YA role acts as a further motivator. Charlotte values the scope and influence of YA work (705-718), perceiving the organisation as having "the greatest impact" (1577) on the local community. She appreciates the trust and autonomy allowed to her in her Streetbase Coordinator role, suggesting "you won't get that everywhere and anywhere" (1223-1224).

Charlotte is motivated to address particular community issues. She believes that there is a problem of "stigma" (2154) and negative "stereotypes" (1589) against young people and she believes that part of the YA role is to create more positive attitudes towards youths (1579-1597). Charlotte identified the issue of "serious violence in the borough" (1725) and she believes that mental health problems play a role "when it comes to these victims and perpetrators" of crime (1749-1750), along with poverty and social disadvantage (1699-1711). Charlotte also feels that homelessness is a "growing" (2221) problem, along with the gentrification of the borough (2224-2242). Finally, Charlotte described herself as "really passionate" (1306) about supporting young parents.

4.9 Cross-Case Findings

The cross-case findings identified the commonalities and differences across the participants' narratives in answer to the research question. The findings were developed from the subordinate and superordinate themes, which are presented in Appendices H, K, L, M, N, O and P. Table 6 provides an overview of the cross-case findings.

Table 6

Overview of Cross-Case Findings

What were the Participants' Conceptualisations of their Experiences?
Conceptualisations of the YA Role. • All six participants conceptualised the role as flexible and involving a variety of activities to tackle social issues such as youth advocacy, peer education, and involvement in community decision-making. Although all participants similarly described the role as youth-led, Emily identified some limitations in this aspect of the role; she lamented that YA members held less power and influence that she had expected. • All participants gave examples of YA work promoting change at individual and systemic levels for young people and others in the community. **YA and the Construct of Self.** • Jack and Megan provided detailed accounts of their negative self-concepts before joining YA; both participants noted considerable improvements in their respective self-views as a result of YA involvement. In particular, Jack portrayed the positive transformational impact of YA on his life. • All participants outlined their journeys into YA. Joshua and Megan reported previous involvement in peer support roles at school and long-term motivation to help others. Chloe, Emily, and Charlotte described experiences of living in social and/or economic

disadvantage. Megan described herself as feeling marginalised and powerless to affect community change before joining YA and Emily also self-identified as experiencing "a lot of injustices" and "inequality". Joshua, meanwhile, reported experiencing violent crime in the community and Emily described negative experiences with the council and the police. Joshua, Megan and Emily each described themselves as passionate about social change before YA involvement. Conversely, Jack's narrative on his journey into YA was more internally focused on his personal difficulties, particularly at school, which led to him feeling increasingly marginalised and unsupported.

- All participants attributed their YA participation with bearing a significantly positive impact on their self-view, developing their self-awareness and helping them to feel more empowered, visible, and as advocates for their local communities. They found it hard to contemplate how different their lives would be had they not joined YA.
- Jack and Charlotte attributed YA with developing a strong reputation or individual identity for themselves within their community. Both were long-term members and were apprehensive about leaving YA, viewing the ageing out process as a threat to their identity. Chloe had also been involved with YA for a similar length of time; however, she had a clear plan in place to secure a training contract to become a solicitor and although she was invested in YA, she was confident that she would be transitioning into a career in law by the time that she reached the age limit for YA involvement.
- All participants expressed their ongoing commitment to YA, suggesting that they planned to remain involved until they reached the cut-off age. All participants expressed a long-term commitment to community development and social justice work, either as their main profession, or alongside careers in law, art, nursing, and business.
- All participants attributed the training and experiences accessed through YA with

developing a range of their skills and competencies. At a practical level, these included first aid and resuscitation skills, along with time management and organisational skills. Participants described greater community understanding and civic engagement, including increased familiarity with community change processes. They reported that they were more involved in their local communities. Joshua and Megan, who had described themselves as shy or as having difficulties communicating with others on joining YA, conceptualised YA involvement as pushing them out of their comfort zones to develop and realise their capabilities; both described very helpful gains in their confidence and communication skills. Indeed, all participants reported improvements in communication, including public speaking and presentation skills. Participants also described greater resilience, and Jack, who self-identified as having emotional difficulties pre-YA involvement, reported improvements in his ability to communicate and express his emotions. Participants described gains in team working and team management skills, conflict resolution and ability to handle challenging situations. They described themselves as more diplomatic and empathetic, perceiving themselves as holding fewer biases and preconceived ideas about others. Participants also described gains in their social interaction skills and in their ability to read social situations.

- Skills developed through YA were found to be transferrable to other areas, with Chloe, Megan and Charlotte reporting that YA had led to more positive gains for them in education. Joshua suggested that he was producing better art as a result of his experiences, and Emily reported that she had set up her own business, attributing YA with developing her entrepreneurial skills. Participants suggested that YA had developed their work readiness skills, enhanced their CV, and increased their future employability. Several participants suggested that YA was a good steppingstone to their prospective careers in law and community development. Charlotte, who had been involved with YA

the longest, attributed YA with securing prestigious work experience placements and reported that she had been offered mentorships and future work opportunities as a result of her YA involvement. All six participants stated the belief that their YA participation would enhance their future career options.

- Participants generally characterised YA as a supportive peer network, with members offering each other guidance on topics ranging from parenting to university applications. Jack, Chloe, Emily, and Charlotte, the participants who had been involved the longest, placed particular value on the close friendships established through the organisation. Participants characterised YA membership as diverse and they appreciated the connections formed across diversity, suggesting that the organisation had brought them together. Jack, who self-identified as having relationship difficulties pre-YA involvement, reported that YA had made his relationships better. Participants described an increase in their social networks and a greater sense of community. Furthermore, they attributed YA with developing their connections to authority figures in the council, community, and local services, which they believed might be of benefit to them in the long-term, particularly in their future careers.

Factors Attributed to the Effectiveness of the Role.

- Jack, Joshua, Emily, and Charlotte identified the youth-led approach of YA as contributing to the effectiveness of the YA role. They suggested that the peer-to-peer engagement model allows for greater access to youths in the community and they proposed that YA members can empathise and connect with young people in the community through shared experiences. YA members were characterised as compensating for adult stakeholders' limitations, particularly in their understanding of the zeitgeist and youth culture. YA members were conceptualised as holders of insider knowledge as youths living in the community and the importance of youth involvement

in community decision-making was emphasised.

- The preventative approach of YA work was identified by Jack, Megan, and Emily, as contributing to the effectiveness of the role. This included the cumulative gains of the various training provided by YA for its members and youths in the community. YA membership was also conceptualised as a preventative measure for young people at-risk of gang involvement and criminal activity, as an alternative source of income and socialisation. Furthermore, YA member training on topics such as safeguarding was portrayed as aiding role delivery and preventing issues arising, particularly during street engagement work.
- Jack, Chloe, Megan, and Charlotte highlighted the importance of directly engaging with community members through YA work, to foster relationships, share information, and gather views to better represent the community in meetings with adultstakeholders.
- Chloe, Megan, and Charlotte identified organisational factors contributing to the effectiveness of the YA role. Included in these was the provision of official YA lanyards and clothing. Participants also lauded the YA manager as supportive, facilitating a variety of opportunities, and supporting members in their role delivery. The organisational commitment to inclusivity and diversity among its membership was similarly highlighted as an enabler.
- The power situated within the YA role was identified by Joshua, Megan, Emily, and Charlotte, as contributing to its effectiveness. Participants felt empowered by their insider positioning within the council, perceiving themselves as offering the youthvoice in community decision-making. They felt listened to and respected on this platform and they expressed their belief that they are making an impact and contributing to positive change in their community. YA was also conceptualised as offering an effective means for youths to challenge professionals and the status quo. However, it should be noted

that Emily also identified limitations in that power, advocating for more influence and agency within the YA role.

- Chloe, Emily, and Charlotte identified support from peers within YA as enabling their role delivery.

Challenges in Role.

- Jack, Joshua, and Megan identified difficulties arising during YA street engagement activities. These included safety risks, difficulties working outdoors in poor weather conditions, and the reluctance of some youths to engage with YA members. Megan was particularly affected by negative responses from youths.
- Jack, Chloe and Joshua described a lack of understanding in the community regarding the YA role and its positioning in relation to the council. Chloe also suggested that there is added responsibility inherent in the YA role given the links to the council.
- All participants except Megan described difficulties in youth-adult community collaborations. They recalled negative experiences when they felt tokenised and not treated as equal project partners by adult stakeholders in community collaborations and decision-making. Such incidents were found to lead to frustration and fracturing of trust in youth-adult relationships. Participants also raised the issue of the authentic youth voice being compromised at times. Additionally, Joshua reported feeling intimidated talking to authority figures and struggling to access technical language usedat some meetings.
- Chloe, Emily, and Charlotte identified organisational barriers to role delivery. These included limitations in funding, both in the YA national charity and in community agencies, leading to some fluctuations in the amount of YA work available month to month. Concerns were raised by Emily about a lack of equality when allocating YA work, along with miscommunication and perceived hierarchy in some YA team projects.

Additionally, Chloe cited a lack of cohesion between YA franchises at regional levels, leading to a disconnect within the national charity.

- As mentioned in the previous section, Emily identified limitations in the power of YA as a barrier to role delivery, seeking more YA influence in community decision- making.
- Time was identified as a further barrier by Joshua, Megan, and Charlotte, due to the very gradual nature of community change, along with the difficulties of youth members balancing YA work with other competing demands on their time, such as school exams and university.
- Emily and Charlotte cited relationship difficulties within YA as a challenge in the role.

Factors Contributing to Continued Involvement.

- All participants attributed the quality of the YA work as sustaining their continued involvement, particularly Jack, Chloe, and Charlotte, who had been involved the longest. Participants described the work as overwhelmingly positive using descriptors such as 'enjoyable', 'fun', and 'interesting'. They valued the variation in YA activities, perceiving the work to be worthwhile and purposeful. They also valued the youth-led nature of the work.
- Similarly, all participants were motivated to remain involved by intrinsic factors. Participants obtained a sense of belonging and community from YA; they enjoyed the social aspects of the work and the diverse connections and friendships formed. They felt empowered and gained a sense of pride in their achievements and contributions towards community change, feeling successful in their role. Participants described a feel-good factor in helping others and a passion for social change. They also appreciated the self-development aspect of the YA role.
- The views and behaviours of others were also found to act as motivators for participants' continued involvement. Participants believed their YA work and achievements to be

viewed positively by their families, friends, and teachers. They valued the recognition and positive feedback they receive for their work, from within YA and from adult stakeholders in the community. Participants believe that others view them more positively due to their YA involvement. Although Joshua emphasised that his engagement with YA work was "not for recognition", he conceded that his family were supportive and interested in his work.

- All participants described the financial reimbursement for YA work as an additional motivator. Although Jack and Charlotte reported that the financial gain was their primary motivator initially, their intrinsic motivation quickly took over. Participants were also motivated by the flexibility of the role and the working hours, particularly Charlotte who has a child.
- Jack, Megan, and Charlotte described the power and influence invested in the YA role as motivating their continued involvement. They valued their position as youth experts and their role in community decision-making. They believe that YA offers them a platform and a mechanism to exercise their voice to contribute to positive change.
- All participants were motivated to address specific community issues. These included poverty and homelessness in the borough, as well as unequal distribution of community resources. The issue of gentrification in the borough was also raised by several participants. Participants suggested that youths are often marginalised and neglected in community development, highlighting a lack of amenities and opportunities for youth in the borough. Mental health was identified as a problem, along with serious crime, including knife crime and gang activity in the borough. Several participants reported fearing for their safety and the safety of loved ones. LGBT issues, climate change, and support for young parents were also highlighted as areas of need by participants.

5. **DISCUSSION**

This chapter will provide a detailed exploration of the findings, and the researcher's interpretations of those findings, relating to the participants' lived experiences of the community psychology intervention, under each of the six superordinate themes. A range of psychological theories will be used to reflect and elaborate on the youths' conceptualisations and experiences concerning their YA role, sense of self, personal growth, enablers and barriers in the role, along with the factors motivating their continued involvement. Similarities and differences will be identified between this study and the existent literature, with a particular focus on the 28 studies contained in the literature review.

5.1 Participants' Conceptualisations of the YA role

Consistent with the interventions explored in the literature review, the YA model was found to align with the key principles of community psychology, which include the adoption of prevention, empowerment and strength-based approaches, a focus on social justice, the adoption of an ecological rather than an individualistic perspective, and the promotion of diversity, sense of community, and active citizenship (Jason at al., 2019). Furthermore, in keeping with the community psychology interventions contained in the review, YA works with marginalised and underrepresented populations, supporting them to analyse their situations and take action, often at multiple levels, to promote wellness and create social change, rather than just individual change (Nelson & Evans, 2014; Zimmerman & Eisman, 2017).

5.1.1 A Varied Role

All of the participants conceptualised the YA role as involving a variety of activities to tackle social issues such as advocacy and civic engagement, peer education and adult stakeholder training, participation in local events and community development projects. Participants explained that they offered the youth perspective at community meetings and

consultations with local agencies; they deliver workshops and speak at conferences, as well as gathering views from community members and analysing this data to contribute to community change efforts. Some YA members also adopted leadership roles within the organisation. The sheer variation of activities offered through YA distinguishes it from most of the community psychology interventions contained in the literature review. Nevertheless, many of the community psychology interventions explored in the literature review involved similar activities and focused on similar objectives to YA. The intervention in the Borden and Serido (2009) study, for example, also aimed to promote civic responsibility and similar to YA members, participants in the Atkinson (2012) and Schwartz and Suyemoto (2013) studies received training and subsequently became involved in social action campaigns tackling specific community problems. Several studies shared the YA objectives of promoting youth mental health (Kennedy et al., 2018) and reducing youth violence and offending (Franzen et al., 2009; Zlotowitz et al., 2016). Furthermore, the intervention in the Wernick et al. (2014) study shared the YA focus on making schools more inclusive, albeit addressing this goal through different means; they studied a community-based programme that used theatre within a transformative organising model, whereas YA members worked at a systemic level in the community to influence policies and procedures within local schools.

Similar to YA, participants in the Franzen et al. (2009) study engaged in youth-adult community collaborations as part of social action campaigns; however, the adults in the Franzen et al. (2009) study were neighbourhood advocates recruited from the local community whereas adults collaborating on projects with YA members were usually council workers or adults working within local agencies. The Streetbase youth engagement programme offered by YA was also somewhat comparable to the community-led projects explored by Miller et al. (2015), which aimed at engaging at-risk young people in areas with high levels of social deprivation through media and sports-related activities; however, the focus of the Miller et al. (2015) study

was primarily to help youths into education, employment or training, whereas the objective of Streetbase appeared to be broader, to engage youths by signposting them to recreational and vocational opportunities, with the ultimate aim to reduce youth violence and offending.

Finally, some of the YA activities shared commonalities with activities outlined in the reviewed studies implementing participatory research approaches (e.g., Flicker, 2008; Gallerani et al., 2017; Taggart et al., 2013). YA members similarly engaged in community- based research activities to obtain residents' views regarding community services and problems that affect them. However, in contrast with PAR studies such as Taggart et al. (2013) and Cooper (2005), YA research activities did not always progress to taking action. The YA focus was predominantly on gathering community data for social action campaigns, which was then returned to the commissioning agency, who ultimately acted on the findings. This could be problematic as Fisher-Borne and Brown (2018) suggested that participatory research projects which are solely exploratory and do not involve an 'action', can potentially disempower individuals, particularly those who already identify as marginalised.

5.1.2 Promoting Change for Individuals in the Community

In keeping with community psychology principles (Nelson & Evans, 2014; Prilleltensky, 2014; Zimmerman & Eisman, 2017) and the assertion by Evans and Prilleltensky (2007) that well-being requires the fulfilment of the personal, relational, and collective needs and aspirations of individuals and their communities, all six YA participants gave examples of their YA work promoting change at multiple levels in their community. At a personal level, YA members reported delivering preventative training to reduce youth gang involvement and they participated in campaigns to increase civic engagement and community participation among local youth residents, a worthwhile endeavour given that youth civic engagement and participation are associated with multiple positive outcomes including positive identity development, academic achievement, increased self-confidence, improved social

communication skills, enhanced career aspirations, reduced risk behaviours, and good physical health (Shaw et al., 2014). Participants also offered support to youths in the community to set up their own businesses and they referred them to local opportunities to develop their interests and hobbies. At a relational level, YA members directly engaged with community members, gathering their views, and they endeavoured to build and maintain genuine relationships with vulnerable youths.

5.1.3 Affecting Change at a Systemic Level

Prilleltensky (2014) advocated for community-based interventions to challenge the status quo by addressing the systemic and social conditions which contribute to problems occurring. Accordingly, all participants gave examples of YA work promoting change at a systemic level, to meet the collective needs and aspirations of individuals and their communities (Evans & Prilleltensky, 2007). One example of systemic YA work provided by participants included YA involvement with the London Youth Assembly, where they worked collaboratively with youths from other boroughs to address community issues across London. YA members were also described as facilitating their local council in making decisions that impact young people. They were reported as sitting on boards within the council, advocating for youths, and they influence local policies and procedures, contributing to changes to community service delivery through work with schools, the police, and local mental health services. According to participants, they have delivered training to MPs, councillors, and professionals in the criminal justice system on how to better engage with young people. YA members also reported promoting collective awareness and action on youth mental health, violence against women and girls, and the climate change emergency. Furthermore, Chloe described her role as a trustee on the board of the YA national charity, suggesting that this allowed her to bear an impact on the wider functioning of the charity.

5.1.4 A Flexible and Youth-led Working Model

All six participants conceptualised the YA working model as flexible and youth-led, from the initial interview to the freedom of youth members to choose work based on their interests and schedules. Similarly, youth participants in many of the literature reviewed studies conceptualised their community psychology programmes as youth-led (e.g., Bulanda & McCrea, 2013; Gomez & Ryan, 2016; Zlotowitz et al., 2016). Interventions in the literature review varied in terms of the degree of involvement and leadership granted to youths, however; participants in the Nicholas et al. (2019) study shared the most commonality with YA members as they were similarly permitted to assume leadership roles in activities, with adults acting as facilitators to young people in their role delivery. Participants in the current study identified the YA manager as the only adult over the age of 25; youths were therefore offered the opportunity to attain positions of power and influence within the organisation. Members reported that they were allowed autonomy and creative freedom within their role to develop and deliver training and to adapt service delivery based on personal judgment and needs arising.

5.2 YA and the Participants' Constructs of Self

5.2.1 Negative Self-Concept Pre-YA involvement

Jack and Megan provided detailed accounts of their negative self-concepts before joining YA; they conceptualised themselves as having communication and emotional difficulties, impacting their relationships and life participation. Both participants noted considerable improvements in their respective self-views as a result of YA involvement, suggesting the powerful influence of the intervention in supporting participants to positively reframe negative self-concepts.

5.2.2 Journey Into YA

All participants outlined their journeys into YA. In corroboration with the literature on motivators for youth engagement (Harré, 2007) and studies from the literature review (Makhoul

et al., 2012; Wernick et al., 2014), the social injustices, marginalisation, and powerlessness personally experienced by many of the youths in the current study led to their engagement to affect change for other community members; this was a key motivator for Emily in particular. Participants also reported previous involvement in peer support roles and long-term interest in social change, civic engagement and helping others.

5.2.3 YA as a Significant Turning Point in Life

Jack portrayed the positive transformational impact of YA, conceptualising his joining the organisation as a significant turning point in his life. He had been excluded from school and he believed that he had been labelled "a bad kid" before YA involvement. Similar to the findings of Schwartz and Suyemoto (2013), Jack's positive changes in self-concept could be attributed to his opportunity to be viewed as a positive, contributing member of society; Schwartz and Suyemoto (2013) suggested that such opportunities may be particularly beneficial for youths from minority and disadvantaged communities where negative stereotypes can proliferate, arguing that recognition as role models by others, especially adults with power, may be particularly influential on how these young people view themselves.

5.2.4 Impact of YA on Current View of Self

All participants attributed their YA participation with bearing a considerably positive impact on their self-concept, developing their self-awareness. Consistent with previous findings (Atkinson, 2012; Beshers, 2007; Flicker, 2008; Kennedy et al., 2018; Makhoul et al., 2012; Miller et al., 2015; Taggart et al., 2013; Wernick et al., 2014), participants in the current study attributed their YA involvement with improved self-confidence and emotional stability, including lower levels of self-reported anxiety. They identified themselves as more proactive and as embracing opportunities.

There is growing evidence suggesting that actively involving young people in critical examinations of their communities to affect social change can strengthen youth identities as

members of their communities, expanding problem-solving and critical-thinking skills (Suleiman et al., 2006). To this end, studies from the reviewed literature (Atkinson, 2012; Kolano & Davila, 2019; Nicholas et al., 2019; Richards-Schuster & Aldana 2013; Ventura, 2017; Wernick et al., 2014) relayed participant accounts attributing programme participation with the acquisition of critical thinking skills and development of critical consciousness (Freire, 2000; Ginwright & Cammarota, 2002), enabling them to question structural systems of power and to begin to unpack the root causes and historical trends of social injustices. Young people in the current study similarly perceived important shifts in themselves as a result of their YA participation. They felt that they were more politically and civically engaged, with greater understanding of their community, the issues facing them, and the processes for affecting community change. Aligning with previous research (Bulanda & McCrea, 2013; Gomez & Ryan, 2016; Kolano & Davila, 2019), participants described themselves as more empathetic and diplomatic, perceiving themselves as holding fewer biases and preconceived ideas about others. This aligned with results from the literature review which found that participants perceived changes in their oppressive attitudes and behaviours (Atkinson, 2012; Davidson et al., 2010), along with increased confidence to intervene when others made statements that could foster negative attitudes or beliefs (Beshers, 2007; Borden & Serido, 2009; Kennedy et al., 2018).

Consistent with research findings from studies on adolescent identity development (Ragelienė, 2016) and community psychology interventions (Bulanda & McCrea, 2013; Flicker, 2008; Schwartz & Suyemoto, 2013; Ventura; 2017; Zlotowitz et al., 2016), participants in the current study also described positive changes in self-image and they perceived that other people viewed them more positively and treated them with greater respect as a result of their YA involvement. It is suggested that youth in this age cohort are a population that could particularly benefit from community psychology intervention because they are at a stage of

development when they are exploring their identities, asking questions about social justice, and seeking experiences to enable them to affect change (Checkoway & Richards-Schuster, 2006; Richards-Schuster & Aldana, 2013; Richards-Schuster & Dobbie, 2011). Furthermore, others' appraisal is particularly influential in these years when self-consciousness is heightened (Elkind, 1967; Fenigstein, 1979).

The goal of empowerment is one of the most oft-cited reasons for implementing community psychology interventions (Chambers, 1997; Cooper, 2005; Nelson & Wright, 1995). All participants attributed their YA participation with helping them to feel more empowered and as advocates and change agents for their local communities. They reported that they felt more involved and visible within their communities and they considered themselves as positive role models for others. Consistent with previous findings (Flicker, 2008; Gomez & Ryan, 2016), youth participants of this community psychology intervention perceived that their contribution to the various YA projects mattered; they felt that they had a voice and were valued and listened to by others, including community stakeholders, and they believed that their YA experiences were equipping them with skills that would benefit them in their future lives and careers. Many of the participants found it difficult to contemplate how different their lives would be had they not joined YA. Consistent with the reviewed literature (Hinnant, 2001; Kolano & Davila, 2019; Nicholas et al., 2019; Wernick et al., 2014), participants in the current study witnessed concrete changes at individual, community, and policy levels, as a result of their YA work. Similarly concurring with previous studies (Atkinson, 2012; Miller et al., 2015; Wernick et al., 2014), participants attributed YA participation with instilling in them a sense of hope and determination to continue working towards change.

Consistent with psychological empowerment theory (Zimmerman, 1990) and previous research on the topic (Kennedy et al., 2018; Taggart et al., 2013), the participants were found to have increased sense of personal agency and enhanced experience of autonomy and self-

efficacy, stemming from their experiences of completing important tasks and taking on valued roles within YA. Self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000) can also be used to frame the participants' developmental and psychological changes, as it holds that individuals experience enhanced well-being when their interactions with their environments meet their needs for self-determination, recognised as comprising of autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Bulanda & McCrea, 2013).

5.2.5 Ageing Out of YA as a Threat to Identity

Jack and Charlotte, both long-term members of YA, attributed their YA involvement with developing a strong reputation or identity for themselves within their community. Kennedy et al. (2018) similarly found that personal outcome effects were more marked for participants who were involved with community psychology interventions for longer periods. Both participants were apprehensive about leaving YA, viewing the ageing out process as a threat to their identity. Delgado and Staples (2008) described the ageing out of such youth roles as inevitable, yet the implications are significant at both the organisational and personal levels; they advocated for setting up clear structures to ease the transition for all concerned.

5.2.6 Conceptualising the Future Self

All participants expressed their ongoing commitment to YA, suggesting that they planned to remain involved until they reached the cut-off age of 25. All participants expressed a long-term dedication to community development and social justice work, either as their main profession, or alongside future careers in law, art, nursing, and business. This complies with previous research (Gallerani et al., 2017; Weinronk et al., 2018; Wernick et al., 2014), which found that young people involved in community psychology interventions reported motivation for further action after project completion, attributing participation with sparking their desire to continue helping others (Bulanda & McCrea, 2013; Gomez & Ryan, 2016).

5.3 Participants' Experiences of Personal Growth Through YA Involvement

5.3.1 Building Skills and Competencies

Several participants conceptualised YA involvement as pushing them out of their comfort zones to develop and realise their capabilities. In line with Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs, they conceptualised YA as having a self-actualising influence, with Jack explaining that it "helps me be who I want".

Similar to the young people involved in the various literature reviewed programmes, YA participants perceived many adaptive benefits accruing from their participation. In accordance with several studies (Bruck, 2018; Cooper, 2005; Hinnant, 2001; Kolano & Davila, 2019; Makhoul et al., 2012; Nicholas et al., 2019; Richards-Schuster & Aldana, 2013; Wernick et al., 2014), YA members cited advancements in social interaction and communication skills, including public speaking and presentation skills. They described greater resilience, with Jack who self-identified as having emotional difficulties pre-YA involvement reporting improvements in his ability to communicate and express his emotions. Participants described gains in their conflict resolution skills and their ability to handle challenging situations. Similarly, the results of this study aligned with those of previous studies (Atkinson, 2012; Bruck, 2018; Cooper, 2005; Kulbok et al., 2015; Weinronk et al., 2018; Zlotowitz et al., 2016) in finding that the community psychology intervention led to positive developments in participants' group working, leadership, organisational and self-management skills. Participants also reported developing their emergency first aid and mental health knowledge.

From a community development perspective, participants felt that they acquired skills in community action and they described greater civic participation, a promising outcome as long-term studies have shown that individuals who participate in active citizenship in youth remain more civically engaged than their non-participating peers, even decades later (Verba et al., 1995). This also resonates with the results of the Weinronk et al. (2018) study, who found

that involvement with their community psychology intervention expanded the perspectives of youth participants, allowing them to develop new understandings of their communities and their roles and responsibilities within them, along with a deeper understanding of the roles that community members can have in facilitating meaningful change.

Similar to the participants in the Schwartz and Suyemoto (2013) study, the participants in this study were able to transfer competencies developed through YA involvement into other areas of their lives; they self-reported improved relationships with others and increased participation at school. Joshua reported that he was producing better art as a result of his YA experiences and Charlotte suggested that she was a more "confident and proud mum" as a result of her involvement. Participants conceptualised YA as equipping them with skills for adult life.

5.3.2 Aiding Future Career Prospects

In accordance with findings from the literature review (Bruck, 2018; Nicholas et al., 2019), participants in this study felt that many of their newly developed skills helped to prepare them for college and their future careers. They believed that the skills and experiences gained through YA enhanced their CV and increased their future employability. Participants attributed YA with fostering their confidence to pursue their future career goals, with several suggesting that YA was a good steppingstone to their prospective careers in law and community development. Charlotte, who had been involved with YA the longest, attributed YA with securing prestigious work experience placements and reported that she had been offered mentorships and future work opportunities as a result of her YA involvement. Similar to youths in the reviewed studies (Bruck, 2018; Davidson et al., 2010; Flicker, 2008; Makhoul et al., 2012; Nicholas et al., 2019; Stanley, 2003; Weinronk et al., 2018; Wernick et al., 2014), some of the YA participants re-evaluated their plans for the future following project participation, with many of them attributing participation with their desire to pursue future work in social action and community development, thus reinforcing the transformational potential of youth-

led social change projects in laying foundations for life-long social justice engagement.

5.3.3 Developing Relationships With Others

Neighbourhood social capital, a factor positively associated with individual mental health and well-being (De Silva et al., 2005; Fone et al., 2014; Meltzer et al., 2007; Stafford et al., 2008), can be used to frame the formal and informal social connections and networks fostered by the participants in the current study as a result of their YA involvement. Through YA, the participants became involved with a wide variety of community activities (i.e., structural social capital (De Silva et al., 2005)) and they established trust and shared values with other YA and community members (i.e., cognitive social capital (De Silva et al., 2005)).

Consistent with studies from the literature review (Flicker, 2008; Hinnant, 2001; Kennedy et al., 2018; Taggart et al., 2013; Weinronk et al., 2018), the participants described a sense of community, close friendships and social bonds (i.e., bonding social capital) (De Silva et al., 2005) formed through YA involvement, with some alluding to relationships and connections sustained with previous members beyond YA completion. Furthermore, Jack, who self-identified as having relationship difficulties pre-YA involvement, reported that YA had made his relationships better, thus supporting Flanagan's (2003) assertion that:

> youths' experiences in community-based associations are the … starting point for the formation of trusting dispositions. It is in these organisations that they mix with other members of the community, develop a collective identity, learn about loyalty and the reciprocity between trust and trustworthiness, transcend narrow self-interest, and appreciate how their own interests can be realized in the interest of the group. (p. 166)

Following the findings of Richards-Schuster and Aldana (2013), participants in the current study also valued the opportunity to interact and develop friendships with others from diverse backgrounds (i.e., bridging social capital) (De Silva et al., 2005), suggesting that the organisation had brought them together.

YA was generally conceptualised as a supportive peer network. Similar to the findings of Nicholas et al. (2019) and Ventura (2017), members offered each other guidance on topics ranging from parenting to university applications. The participants also reported that they had fostered connections to people in power such as community stakeholders and local service professionals (i.e., linking social capital) (Boeck et al., 2009), which they believed would benefit them in the long-term, particularly in their future careers. Participants also described greater trust and compassion towards community decision-makers as a result of their YA activities, suggesting enhanced social and institutional trust (Daskalopoulou, 2019).

5.4 Factors Conceptualised by Participants as Attributing to the Effectiveness of the Role

5.4.1 Youth-Led Approach

Four participants identified the youth-led approach of YA as contributing to the effectiveness of the YA role. They proposed that the peer-to-peer engagement model allows for greater access to youths in the community and they suggested that YA members can empathise and connect with young community members through shared experiences. Participants in previous studies (Gomez & Ryan, 2016; Makhoul et al., 2012) similarly found that youth-led research projects facilitated greater engagement of high-risk youths as research participants, resulting in better quality data as the youths opened up about challenges that they might have been hesitant to share with more traditional adult researchers.

In the current study, YA members were characterised as compensating for adult stakeholders' limitations, particularly in their understanding of the zeitgeist and youth culture. YA members were conceptualised as holders of insider knowledge as youths living in the community. In support of this, Ngo et al. (2017) asserted that "speaking from one's own circumstance is the foundation for identifying collective injustices, constructing a critique of inequality, and developing agency to advance social change" (p. 362).

The importance of youth involvement in community decision-making was also

emphasised by participants. This aligns with the Community Youth Development approach which views young people's involvement in community decision-making as vital to the development of their communities, alongside their own development (Perkins et al., 2001). From a personal growth perspective, self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000) and the literature on youth engagement (Makhoul et al., 2012) posit that community activities providing opportunities for youth autonomy and decision-making offer maximised benefits to youth participants.

5.4.2 Preventative Approach

The preventative approach of YA work was identified by three participants as contributing to the effectiveness of the role. YA member training on topics such as safeguarding was portrayed as aiding role delivery and preventing issues arising, particularly during street engagement work. It was suggested that cumulative gains were achieved from the various training programmes delivered by YA members to youths in the community.

Furthermore, YA membership was conceptualised as a preventative measure for young people at risk of gang involvement and criminal activity, as an alternative source of income and socialisation. Zlotowitz et al. (2016) similarly hypothesised that youth involvement in their community psychology intervention could prevent future antisocial behaviour. Accordingly, there is a focus on prevention in tackling real-world problems in community psychology, with the understanding that taking preventative action early on can avoid more serious problems developing in the future (Bailey, 2018; Jason et al., 2019).

5.4.3 Directly Engaging With Community Members

Four participants highlighted the importance of directly engaging with community members through YA work, to foster relationships, share information, and gather views to better represent the community in meetings with adult stakeholders. This value placed on community engagement could also be understood as satisfying participants' own need for relatedness, a key

tenet for human wellbeing according to self-determination theory; the concept of relatedness refers to "feeling connected to others, to caring for and being cared for by those others, to having a sense of belongingness both with other individuals and with one's community" (Ryan & Deci, 2002, p. 7).

5.4.4 Organisational Factors

Four participants identified organisational factors as contributing to the effectiveness of the YA role. Included in these was the provision of official YA lanyards and clothing. YA was portrayed as a supportive work setting and the organisational commitment to inclusivity and diversity among its membership was similarly highlighted as an enabler to role delivery, allowing for better representation of the diverse views and experiences of community members. It was also suggested that YA has a very high retention rate amongst its members.

Participants lauded the YA manager as supportive and accessible, facilitating a variety of opportunities and advocating for members in their role delivery, ensuring that the authentic youth voice is retained, particularly during youth-adult community collaborations. The importance of adult approaches in community psychology interventions is well documented in the literature. For example, young people in the Zlotowitz et al. (2016) study stressed the importance of adult practitioners who were trustworthy, non-judgmental, and genuinely cared. Youths in the Miller et al. (2015) study similarly felt empowered as a result of their relationships with adult staff, explaining that they helped them to build bridging capital and opened possibilities in their minds. Furthermore, adults in the Kennedy et al. (2018) study were identified as fostering psychological empowerment in youth participants through their embodiment of openness and power-sharing. Conversely, young participants in the Franzen et al. (2009) study indicated the need for improvement in some of their youth-adult relationships, particularly criticising some adults who tended to be authoritarian and critical rather than youth-led in their approaches, with many participants perceiving that they were not being listened to;

they felt intimidated by some adults involved with their programme, perceiving that their ideas were not valued or acted upon.

5.4.5 Power Situated Within the YA Role

The power situated within the YA role was identified by four participants as contributing to its effectiveness. The participants perceived that they were in a privileged position as YA members, being exposed to a wealth of opportunities that other community members were unlikely to have access to. They felt empowered by their insider positioning within the council, perceiving themselves as offering the youth voice in community decision-making. They felt listened to and respected on this platform and they believed that they were making an impact and contributing to positive change in their community. YA was also conceptualised as offering an effective means for youth to challenge professionals and the status quo. Given the pervasive and disproportionate power held by adults in the community (Blakeslee, 2018; Delgado & Staples, 2008), YA represents an effective strategy towards developing equitable relationships within communities for marginalised young people.

5.4.6 Peer-to-Peer Support

Consistent with the findings of Hinnant (2001), three participants in the current study identified support from peers within YA as enabling their role delivery. This ranged from informal guidance and support to the YA policy of youth members working in pairs and groups.

5.5 Challenges Experienced by the Participants in the Role

5.5.1 Difficulties Arising During Street Work

Participation in community psychology interventions is not without potential risk and negative impact, however. Consistent with previous research (Nicholas et al., 2019), safety concerns were found to limit some YA street engagement activities. Participants also identified difficulties in working outdoors in poor weather conditions. Furthermore, they highlighted the reluctance of some youths to engage with YA members and receiving negative responses was

described by Megan as bearing a negative emotional impact on her.

5.5.2 YA Positioning in Relation to the Council

Three participants described a lack of understanding in the community regarding the YA role and its positioning in relation to the council. As suggested by some of the youths, it would be helpful to raise community awareness about YA, and this could help to further develop the organisation as a liaison between the council and the community. Chloe also suggested that there is added responsibility inherent in the YA role given the links to the council.

5.5.3 Difficulties in Youth-Adult Community Collaborations

Five participants described difficulties in youth-adult community collaborations. They recalled negative experiences when they felt tokenised and not treated as true project partners by adult stakeholders in projects and community decision-making. Such incidents were found to lead to frustration and fracturing of trust in youth-adult relationships. Participants in the Flicker (2008) study similarly lamented a perceived lack of attention they received from some adult project partners, questioning the rhetoric of 'partnership' and describing a "power dynamic" at play (p.81); the same authors suggested that adults who wish to partner with youths should ensure to find ways to engage and partner with socially excluded young people that do not re-inscribe relations of power and inequity. Taggart et al. (2013), meanwhile, stressed the importance of managing youths' expectations from the outset of projects. In contrast, participants involved in the Bruck (2018) study, who enjoyed a more equal power balance and shared decision-making with adult project partners, reported a sense of pride and ownership over their project, describing areas of personal growth and belief that their voices were heard.

Additionally, Joshua in the current study reported feeling intimidated talking to authority figures and struggling to access some technical language used at meetings with adult stakeholders. However, he identified as helpful support received from adult allies who facilitate youth contributions at meetings.

5.5.4 Organisational Factors

Four participants identified organisational barriers to role delivery. Among these were limitations in funding, both in the YA national charity and in community agencies, leading to some fluctuations in the amount of YA work available from month to month. Other studies (Flicker, 2008; Weinronk et al., 2018) similarly highlighted the reliance of community-based work on resource investment.

Concerns were raised by Emily about a lack of equality when allocating YA work, along with miscommunication and perceived hierarchy in some YA team projects. Additionally, Chloe cited a lack of cohesion between YA franchises at regional levels, leading to a disconnect within the national charity; she advocated for more nationally focused work to have a bigger impact on young people across the country.

5.5.5 Limitations in the Power of the YA Role

Emily identified limitations in the power of YA as a barrier to role delivery, seeking more YA influence in community decision-making. This resonates with the findings of some of the papers in the literature review. For example, the Taggart et al. (2013) study identified an inherent risk involved in community psychology interventions as participants can discover the enormity of the problems facing them, as well as the limits to a project's capacity to affect necessary changes. It is therefore important that programmes link the process of empowerment to "tangible outcomes that achieve tangible results" (Boehm & Staples, 2002, p. 452). Furthermore, Gomez and Ryan (2016, p.192) cautioned that "having a 'voice' does not always lead to change"; participants might feel empowered to make a difference and while they may be able to share their ideas and recommendations to an audience that holds power to make changes (e.g., policymakers), that does not mean that their recommendations will be considered and acted upon. As cautioned by Wang et al. (1998, p. 85), "participants who are motivated to become actors for change may feel a sense of cynicism, despair or powerlessness when the

results of their efforts fail to match their expectations".

5.5.6 Relationship Difficulties

Emily and Charlotte cited relationship difficulties within YA as a challenge in the role, specifically team working with some other YA members, suggesting the need for some additional team building and conflict resolution support.

5.5.7 Time

Time was identified as a further barrier by three participants, due to the very gradual nature of community change. Although community-based projects can be deeply rewarding, previous studies (Flicker, 2008; Weinronk et al., 2018) similarly highlighted that such work often requires long-term relationships, and a lot of time, care, and commitment on the part of everyone involved. Difficulties were also identified by participants relating to youth members balancing YA work with other competing demands on their time, such as school exams and university.

5.6 Factors Conceptualised by Participants as Contributing to Continued Involvement

5.6.1 Quality of the YA Work

Consistent with previous research on community psychology interventions (Beshers, 2007; Hinnant, 2001; Kolano & Davila, 2019), participants attributed the quality of the YA work as sustaining their continued involvement. They described the work as overwhelmingly positive using descriptors such as 'enjoyable', 'fun', and 'interesting'. They valued the variation in YA activities, perceiving the work to be worthwhile and purposeful. They also appreciated the youth-led nature of the work. Previous researchers similarly found that their youth participants responded best when activities were youth-led, allowing them to gain experience and self-efficacy, and to feel more ownership (Bulanda & McCrea, 2013; Zlotowitz et al., 2016). According to the results of the Hinnant (2001) study, their youth participants also immersed themselves in their project because they felt that they were able to make decisions to

determine the direction and activities of the group.

5.6.2 Within Person Factors

Participants were found to obtain a sense of belonging and community from YA; they enjoyed the social aspects of the work and the diverse connections and friendships formed. These findings aligned with the results of previous studies, which found that participants of community psychology interventions valued meeting a community of like-minded peers (Nicholas et al., 2019) and appreciated having other group members to work with to meet shared goals, believing their collective voice to be much stronger and more effective than if they were acting alone (Hinnant, 2001).

In further corroboration with previous research (Hinnant, 2001; Kolano & Davila, 2019; Schwartz & Suyemoto, 2013; Taggart et al., 2013), participants in the current study were motivated to get involved with the community psychology intervention by their desire to make a difference, and by their understanding that their actions could have a positive impact on others. Joshua was particularly aware of his privilege, describing a moral obligation to help and support others less fortunate. Participants also described themselves as having a passion for social change, with Emily, in particular, suggesting that "this is the type of work that I would do even if I didn't get paid to do it"; Emily also described her own experiences of injustice and inequality as motivating her social action. Participants described a feel-good factor in helping and advocating for others. Indeed, research has found that engaging in compassionate acts can activate areas of the brain associated with the reward-system; therefore, the positive feelings created by compassionate acts serve to reinforce further altruistic behaviours (Klimecki et al., 2014). Youths in the Bulanda and McCrea (2013) study similarly identified the opportunity to provide care to others as one of the most valued aspects of their programme.

Participants appreciated the self-development aspect of the YA role. They felt empowered by their YA experiences, with Jack, in particular, explaining that "it feels good" to

be “young and be listened to”. They gained a sense of pride from their achievements and contributions towards community change, feeling successful in their work. Following self-determination theory, YA involvement can be seen as satisfying youths’ need for competence, understood to be a “felt sense of confidence and effectance in action” (Ryan &Deci, 2002, p. 7). In the reviewed literature, youths similarly described experiences of individual empowerment through, for example, developments in self-confidence and courage to advocate for themselves (Wernick et al., 2014) and programme activities which granted them opportunities to understand their ethnic histories and further develop their identities (Kolano & Davila, 2019).

5.6.3 Views and Behaviours of Others

The views and behaviours of others were also found to act as motivators for continued involvement. Participants believed their YA work and achievements to be viewed favourably by their families, friends, and teachers. Consistent with the findings of Schwartz and Suyemoto (2013), they believed that others were impressed and viewed them more positively due to their YA involvement, perceiving them as knowledgeable about local matters and as young people who were ‘doing good’ for the community. Participants valued the recognition and positive feedback they received for their work, both from within YA and from community stakeholders. Youths in the Cooper (2005) study similarly expressed their pride in having people ‘in power’ listen to them and offer respect for their efforts. The influence of others’ views and behaviours can be understood in different ways. Mead (1934) detailed a process by which the ‘reflected appraisal’ of others’ view of oneself is incorporated into one’s self-image. Cooley (1902), on the other hand, proposed the ‘looking-glass self’, suggesting that significant others in young people’s lives become mirrors by which youths see themselves.

5.6.4 Organisational Factors

Similar to the community psychology interventions studied by other researchers

(Atkinson, 2012; Bulanda & McCrea, 2013; Flicker, 2008; Gallerani et al., 2017; Gomez & Ryan, 2016; Hinnant, 2001; Makhoul et al., 2012; Schwartz & Suyemoto, 2013), YA members also received financial reimbursement for their work. All of the participants in the current study described the financial reimbursement as an additional motivator for their YA involvement. Similar to the Schwartz and Suyemoto (2013) study, Jack and Charlotte reported that payment was a major incentive for joining YA, but once they started working, they soon became intrinsically motivated to participate; this finding is consistent with research on processes of motivation in youth (Dawes & Larson, 2011) which suggests that paying youths for their participation can serve as a gateway to intrinsic motivation, particularly in low-income communities where there might be more pressure on young peopleto acquire paid employment.

Participants in the current study were also motivated by the flexibility of the role and the working hours, enabling them to balance YA work with other competing demands on their time. They valued the support from the YA manager, along with the stability and structure offered by YA.

5.6.5 Power of the YA Role

Three participants described the power and influence invested in the YA role as motivating their continued involvement. They suggested that they were recognised as youth experts by community stakeholders and they valued their role in community decision-making, believing themselves as bearing a considerable impact on the local community. They believed that YA offered them a platform and a mechanism to exercise their voice to contribute to positive community change, with Charlotte in particular explaining that she felt like “an equal” to councillors and other adults in positions of power and influence. Previous research similarly found that the process of engaging in action and witnessing concrete changes resulting from those efforts can play a significant role in contributing to young people’s sense of themselves as agents of change (Schwartz & Suyemoto, 2013). As Balsano (2005) observed, “It is

important for youth, just as it is for adults, to know that their opinions and actions have a potential significant effect on different processes associated with resolving issues of communal interest" (p. 193).

5.6.6 Motivated by Addressing Particular Community Issues

Consistent with findings from the reviewed literature (Atkinson, 2012; Gallerani et al., 2017; Kulbok et al., 2015; Richards-Schuster & Aldana, 2013; Weinronk et al., 2018), the young participants in the current study developed an increased awareness of their community's needs through YA participation and they displayed a greater commitment to creating change in their communities and to eradicating social injustices. These included poverty and homelessness in the borough, as well as unequal distribution of community resources. The issue of gentrification in the borough was also raised by several participants. Participants suggested that youths were often marginalised, stigmatised, and neglected in community development, highlighting a lack of amenities and opportunities for young people in the borough. Mental health was also identified as a problem, along with serious crime, including knife crime and gang activity in the borough. Several participants reported fearing for their safety and the safety of loved ones. LGBT issues, climate change, and support for young parents were also highlighted by participants. Similar to youths in the reviewed studies (Bulanda & McCrea, 2013; Hinnant, 2001; Ventura, 2017; Wernick et al., 2014), the participants tended to view community issues as systemic, and they believed that they could have an impact on their larger communities by remedying community problems through the collective empowerment of YA.

6. **CONCLUSIONS**

6.1 Summary of the Findings

Chawla (2001) proposed that criteria for evaluating empowerment should include a more positive sense of self, new skills, enjoyment and social networks, increased sensitivity to the needs of others, and greater understanding of democratic values and behaviours. With this in mind, it is argued that YA participation acted as an empowering process for the young people involved in the current study. Participants experienced considerable benefits to their psychological wellbeing, adaptive functioning, and social capital, concerning individualistic views of social capital (e.g., Bourdieu, 1986), along with societal and community-generated indicators (Leonard & Onyx, 2004; Putnam, 2001), which include components such as youth integration within communities, civic participation, social networks, and trust and confidence in local people and institutions. The structure and mechanism of YA allowed participants to feel that they could affect real changes in their community, and they believed that their voices were listened to by community stakeholders and other people in positions of power. Participants perceived positive changes in self-image to their YA participation and they believed that they were viewed more positively by others as a result of their involvement. Furthermore, participants attributed YA participation with instilling in them a sense of hope and determination to continue working towards change. As evident by the factors motivating these participants' ongoing involvement, positive effects arising from participation in community psychology interventions can be reinforcing, eliciting a positive feedback loop and resulting in broader psychosocial benefits (Schwartz & Suyemoto, 2013).

Although YA is marketed as an intervention for the general youth population, these results suggest the utility of implementing community psychology interventions with young people experiencing mental health difficulties; several factors identified by the study participants as key components to their YA experience are associated with recovery in the

mental health literature, such as social support, satisfying work and financial security (Jacob, 2015), along with attaining a sense of self, hope, empowerment, and coping strategies (Young & Ensing, 1999).

Community psychology focuses on working with marginalised groups to attain true, sustainable, social change, that addresses the central concerns of the communities involved (Kagan et al., 2011). As illustrated by the current study, community psychology interventions provide opportunities for youth to reflect upon and develop personal narratives and identities, and to connect with broader issues affecting their communities, thereby developing their self and social awareness (Harris & Kiyama, 2013; Kolano & Davila, 2019; Patel, 2016).

Not all of the YA experiences described by the participants were positive, however. In particular, limitations were identified in the power of the YA role, along with a reliance on adult stakeholders in community decision-making. Difficulties were also described relating to street engagement activities. Nevertheless, the youths' experiences with YA were overwhelmingly positive. It is suggested that community psychology interventions offer effective processes through which marginalised young people can pose questions about their social worlds and unite with others to collectively act and advocate for change. Furthermore, it is proposed that community psychology interventions offer an attractive model for engaging youths, including marginalised youths and those at risk of social exclusion, offering alternative solutions to the individually focused, professionally driven, interventions for mental health and wellbeing that currently dominate in the UK.

6.2 Limitations of the Study

The sample size involved in the current study was relatively small and therefore could be considered a limitation. Furthermore, as with any context-specific, qualitative research study, it is difficult to generalise these findings to other settings and other groups of young people. As participants were drawn from only one out of sixteen separate franchises of YA

throughout the UK, results may be confounded by local demographics and YA practices unique to this franchise. Nevertheless, through offering details about the specific activities and the organisational context of YA, comparisons can be made with other samples and transferability can be assessed to other settings.

It is also recognised that the voluntary self-selecting nature of participation may cast doubts over the representativeness of the views expressed. It is not known whether there were differences between those YA members who chose to participate and those who did not, in terms of attitudes, experiences, or conceptualisations; it is possible that those who chose to participate were more engaged in YA. In hindsight, more time and effort should have been invested in establishing trust and rapport with the greater YA membership to encourage participation amongst YA members who were more reticent to engage with the outside researcher.

Nevertheless, the paucity of research on the experiences of youths engaged in community psychology interventions in socially disadvantaged areas of the UK supports the value of the current study in further understanding how these young people perceive and express their lived experiences. The intention was to add to the literature by giving them a space to be heard and to share their views in a manner that was exploratory in ethos. Reinforcing this endeavour, Williams and Labonte (2003, p. 65) suggested that “as members of communities experience, reflect and engage in constructive or critical dialogue about their experiences, this may evoke new understandings, internal feelings of dissonance and provoke new and more effective actions that challenge status quo power relations”.

6.3 Dissemination of the Findings

The findings from this research will be shared in several ways. Each of the participants will be sent a summary identifying the key cross-case findings, in order to protect the anonymity and confidentiality of individual accounts. Participants will be invited to a meeting

to discuss the findings and to gather their views for recommendations and actions, including dissemination of the findings, with the aim to promote positive change and to share good practice. A presentation will also be made to the YA manager and the larger YA cohort. Furthermore, it is hoped to present this research to other professionals at the UK Community Psychology Festival in collaboration with the youth participants and to publish part of the research in a peer-reviewed academic journal.

6.4 Recommendations for Future Research

Future research could focus on replicating this study with youth participants from other YA franchises. Furthermore, potentially enriching data could be provided through gathering data from other sources such as the YA manager, local stakeholders, youth recipients of YA services, and people close to the YA members who could potentially comment on changes they have observed them going through while participating with YA. Similarly, the study could be replicated with participants of other community psychology interventions.

Future research could also incorporate participatory methodology, in recognition that such approaches can facilitate the portrayal of a collective reality that more accurately reflects the participants' own experiences and insights (Blum et al., 2010; Jason et al., 2004). Involving YA members as co-researchers could facilitate the collection of more complete information (Cooper, 2005; Fisher-Borne & Brown, 2018; Gilbertson & Barber, 2002) and promote the engagement of the more reticent YA members as participants in the study.

Additionally, longitudinal research could explore the sustainability of effects following youth participation in community psychology interventions and assess whether motivation to engage in social action and community development efforts is maintained in the long-term.

6.5 Implications for EP Practice

It has long been advocated that educational psychology should extend beyond the boundaries of school and education (Eodanable & Lauchlan, 2009; MacKay, 2006). It is

suggested that a community psychology framework to practice offers practitioner EPs with an attractive and effective means to bring about positive change for children and young people. In 2006, MacKay lamented that although "the needs inspiring the ideals of community psychology are greater" than ever, "the achievement of these ideals is further removed from the profession than ever" (p. 7). Recent years, however, have seen a movement in the EP discipline to create new and innovative ways of working outside of the narrow confines of Local Authorities, statutory demands, and traded models of service delivery, which can limit the breadth and creativity of the EP contribution. Indeed, the diversification of EP practice and working models (Lyonette et al., 2019) means that many practitioner EPs may already be operating according to a community psychology model through their work, for example, in social enterprises or in the voluntary sector. However, as community psychology is laden with values and principles that require adoption in practice (Kagan et al., 2011), there is a need to further develop EPs' knowledge, skills, and competence in this area, which providers of initial training and continuing professional development courses should take note of.

The emergent themes developed from the youth participants in the current study are helpful when considering the scope for EP work in this area. It is anticipated that through supporting and strengthening the YA role, positive outcomes can be enhanced for the youth participants. For example, there is scope for EPs to address the challenges to YA members' service delivery. This could involve support for managing challenging relationships, both within YA and in youth-adult collaborative relationships in the community, along with help to navigate difficult encounters with youths during street engagement activities. Although the outcomes of their YA involvement were predominantly positive, challenges in the role were found to bear an emotional impact on the youths involved. There is potential for EP input to foster effective support systems within YA for members to debrief and process emotionally challenging experiences. EPs could be well placed to offer supervision or consultation sessions

with YA members, perhaps alongside their YA manager, to help reflect on and overcome challenges in their work.

As evidenced by the literature review, there is scope for EPs to add to the research base in this area. In particular, EPs could support YA members to implement community-based participatory and action research methods to further comprehend and take action to problems facing them and their communities. EPs could also help YA members to use research to evaluate aspects of their services. YA as an organisation would benefit from support to publicise and develop an understanding of their role within the community. Furthermore, it could be helpful to raise awareness amongst community stakeholders regarding the challenges experienced by YA members in youth-adult community collaborations and the importance of ensuring more equitable power dynamics.

Given the overwhelming array of positive psychological and adaptive benefits found to accrue from the participants' YA experiences, there is a further role for EPs to advocate and to support the implementation of community psychology interventions, particularly for young people from under-resourced and marginalised communities.

6.6 Reflections

As recommended by Schön (1983), I engaged in a continual process of reflection throughout this study, aided through regular use of a reflective diary.

Before undertaking the interviews, I anticipated and prepared for challenges that might occur. In particular, I was concerned that I might have difficulty engaging the participants to gain their trust and elicit their narratives. Consequently, I thought carefully about the interview questions and prompts. I liaised with the YA manager and I worked around the participants' availabilities, rearranging appointment times as to best suit the youths. Before starting each interview, I took time with each participant establishing trust and rapport, gaining their consent, informing them further about the research and providing them with the opportunity to ask any

questions they might have.

Throughout the interviews, I remained mindful of any dynamics occurring between myself and each of the participants. I was cognisant of using prompts when needed to further probe into a topic. At the same time, I endeavoured to be empathetic to their experiences as interviewees, mindful of the impact of my questioning style, and encouraging them as much as possible to feel comfortable and empowered to express their lived experiences. My goal was to ensure that the youths felt their individual stories were listened to and respected.

I greatly appreciated the extent to which the youth participants opened up and shared their thoughts and feelings with me. They gave a rich and valuable understanding of their lived experiences of the community psychology intervention, as well as providing insightful conceptualisations and reflections of their retrospective and prospective life experiences.

I believe that the participants' narratives were heard and honoured. However, in hindsight, I regret not incorporating participatory research approaches to further enhance the transformative and emancipatory potential of the experience and to disrupt any unequal power relations between the researcher and the researched (MacLeod, 2019). Participatory research approaches are more closely aligned with community psychology values, which advocate for active collaboration between researchers and members of subgroups in the planning and implementation stages of a project. Involving YA members in the research process and design could have enhanced local power, rejecting the role of the outside researcher as 'expert'. The youths would have been empowered to become agents rather than objects of the research, and they could have been supported to recognise and investigate issues meaningful to them and their experiences, thus contributing to more culturally and ecologically appropriate research outcomes. Nevertheless, it is hoped that shared decision-making with the participants regarding the processes for disseminating the research findings will serve to enhance the transformative goals for this study.

A range of theories have been considered in relation to the research findings. I found self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000) to be the most useful construct to frame the developmental and psychological changes experienced by the youth participants as a result of their YA involvement; this theory holds that individuals experience enhanced well-being when their interactions with their environments meet their needs for self-determination, recognised as comprising of autonomy, competence, and relatedness. The broad range of activities that participants engaged with through YA, and the support systems in place, optimised their opportunities to have these needs met. Furthermore, I perceived social capital theory (e.g., Durkheim, 1893) to provide a helpful theoretical framework to understand the group and community outcomes produced through YA involvement, portraying how the individual is influenced by their environment and how the environment, in turn, is influenced by the individual. Social capital theory conceptualises the formal and informal social connections and networks formed through YA involvement, which resulted in the accumulation of reciprocity, obligations and shared identities between participants, as well as access to support and resources. Furthermore, social capital provides a valuable construct to understand the participants' sense of belonging and their civic participation and trust in their community.

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8. Appendices

Appendix A

Table A1

Articles excluded from the systematic literature review

Article (n=110)	Did the research have a community psychology theory/value base?	Was an intervention employed?	Were youth views sought on the intervention?	Additional reasoning for exclusion
1. Youth-led activities associated with positive competence changes in a community based program for adolescents (García-Poole, Byrne, & Rodrigo, 2018)	No	Yes	No	
2. Tapping youth as agents for change: evaluation of a peer leadership HIV/AIDS intervention (Pearlman, Camberg, Wallace, Symons, & Finison, 2002)	Yes	Yes	No	
3. The Effects of Youth Empowerment Programs on the Psychological Empowerment of Young People Aging Out of Foster Care (Batista, Johnson, and Baach Friedmann, 2018)	No	Yes	No	
4. Young People as Co-producers in Policing across England: An Evaluation of the 'Youth Commission' on Police and Crime (Burns, 2018)	Yes	Yes	No	
5. Privileging Their Lens: Using Photovoice to Explore the Self-Image of Youth with Upper	Yes	Yes	No	

Limb Differences (Indelicato, Underwood, & Kane, 2019)				
6. Using Photovoice Methodology to Illuminate the Experiences of LGBTQ Former Foster Youth (Capous-Desyllas & Sarah Mountz, 2019)	Yes	Yes	No	
7. Participatory Action Research and Co-Researching as a Tool for Situating Youth Knowledge at the Centre of Research (Martin, Burbach, Lares Benitez, & Ramiz, 2019)	Yes	No	Yes	This was not a primary research study.
8. Violence as a health disparity: Adolescents' perceptions of violence depicted through photovoice (Irby, Rhoades, Freeman, Summers, Rhodes, & Daniel, 2018)	Yes	Yes	No	
9. Community Counts: How Youth Organizations Matter for Youth Development (McLaughlin, 2000)	No	Yes	Yes	
10. Participatory Action Research with Filipino Street Youth: Their Voice and Action against Corporal Punishment (Wartenweiler & Mansukhani, 2016)	Yes	Yes	No	
11. The listen to me project: Creating lasting changes in voice and participation for children in care through a youth-led project (Damiani-Taraba, Sky, Hegler, Woolridge, Anderson,	Yes	Yes	No	

& Koster, 2018)			
12. Engagement and Mentor Support as Drivers of Social Development in the Project K Youth Development Program (Chapman, Deane, Harré, Courtney, & Moore, 2017)	No	Yes	No
13. Through the lens of our cameras: Children's lived experience with food security in a Canadian Indigenous community (Genuis, Willows, & Jardine, 2015)	Yes	Yes	No
14. Exploring the Meanings of Place Attachment Among Civically Engaged Puerto Rican Youth (Estrella & Kelley, 2017)	Yes	Yes	No
15. Insights on Inspirational Education for "High-Risk" Youth Informed by Participatory Action Research (PAR) on Youth Engagement: Short Communication (Iwasaki, Hopper, & Whelan, 2017)	Yes	Yes	No
16. Poetic Justice: Engaging in Participatory Narrative Analysis to Find Solace in the 'Killer Corridor' (Dill, 2015)	Yes	Yes	No
17. Youth-Adult Partnership in Community Organizing: A Case Study of the My Voice Counts! Campaign (Share & Stacks, 2006)	Yes	Yes	No
18. Exploring coping	Yes	Yes	No

among urban youth through Photovoice (Rose, Sharpe, Shdaimah, & deTablan, 2018)			
19. "I was Excited by the Idea of a Project that Focuses on those Unasked Questions" Co-Producing Disability Research with Disabled Young People (Liddiard, Runswick-Cole, Goodley, Whitney, Vogelmann, & Watts, 2019)	Yes	Yes	No
20. Building Bridges into the Community: Social Capital in a Volunteering Project for Care Leavers (Martikke, Cumbers, Cox, Webb, Gedzielewski, & Duale, 2019)	No	Yes	Yes
21. Photovoice for Healthy Relationships: Community-Based Participatory HIV Prevention in a Rural American Indian Community (Markus, 2012)	Yes	Yes	No
22. The impact of a community-based music intervention on the health and well-being of young people: A realist evaluation (Caló, Steiner, Millar, & Teasdale, 2019)	No	Yes	Yes
23. Youth Creating Disaster Recovery: An International Community-Based Participatory Research Project with Youth (Peek, Tobin-Gurley, Cox, & Heykoop,	Yes	Yes	No

	2014)			
24.	Young People Leaving Care: Participatory Research to Improve Child Welfare Practices and the Rights of Children and Young People (Törrönen & Vornanen, 2014)	Yes	Yes	No	
25.	Experiences of community youth leaders in a youth-led early childhood education program in rural Pakistan (Franchett, Yousafzai, Rasheed, Siyal, Reyes, & Ponguta, 2019)	No	Yes	Yes	
26.	Using Action Research to Engage Youth in Improving OST Programming (Hubbard, 2015)	Yes	No	No	
27.	Youth-Adult Partnership: Exploring Contributions to Empowerment, Agency and Community Connections in Malaysian Youth Programs (Krauss, 2014)	No	Yes	Yes	
28.	Hidden Nobodies: Female youth in care participate in an arts-based trauma informed empowerment intervention program (Levy, 2012)	No	Yes	Yes	
29.	Implementation factors that predict positive outcomes in a community-based intervention program for at-risk adolescents (García-Poole, 2019)	No	Yes	No	
30.	Tagging Walls and Planting Seeds: Creating Spaces for Youth Civic Action	Yes	Yes	No	This was not a primary research study.

(Richards-Schuster, 2011)				
31. A scoping review: The utility of participatory research approaches in psychology (Levac, 2019)	Yes	No	No	This was not a primary research study.
32. Engaging Adolescents through Participatory and Qualitative Research Methods to Develop a Digital Communication Intervention to Reduce Adolescent Obesity (Livingood, 2017)	Yes	Yes	No	
33. A student researcher's experience initiating and engaging in a community-based research project with youth (Engelman, 2006)	Yes	Yes	No	
34. Education for Democracy by Young People in Community-Based Organizations (Checkoway, 2013)	Yes	Yes	No	This was not a primary research study.
35. Working reflexively with ethical complexity in narrative research with disadvantaged young people (Kearns, 2014)	No	No	No	
36. Youth Voices and Knowledges: Slam Poetry Speaks to Social Policies (Fields, 2014)	Yes	Yes	No	
37. Sustainable Communities, Sustainable Lives: Urban Youth Perspectives in an Out-of-School Writers' Club (Hill, 2018)	No	Yes	No	
38. Participatory Action Research for Advancing Youth-Led Peacebuilding in Kenya (Amambia, 2018)	Yes	Yes	No	

39. Seeing with our own eyes: Youth in Mathare, Kenya use photovoice to examine individual and community strengths (Dakin, 2015)	Yes	Yes	No
40. Youth-Adult Partnerships in Decision Making: Disseminating and Implementing an Innovative Idea into Established Organizations and Communities (Zeldin, 2008)	No	Yes	No
41. Engaging key stakeholders in climate change: A community-based project for youth-led participatory climate action (Trott, 2018)	Yes	Yes	No
42. Violence as a health disparity: Adolescents' perceptions of violence depicted through photovoice (Irby, 2018)	Yes	Yes	No
43. An Evaluation Study of Youth Participation in Youth Work: A Case Study in Southern Italy (Morciano, 2014)	No	Yes	No
44. Using Photo-Elicitation Methods to Understand Resilience among Ultra-Poor Youth and Their Caregivers in Malawi (Barrington, 2017)	Yes	Yes	No
45. Evaluating community participation as prevention: life narratives of youth (Janzen, 2010)	No	Yes	No
46. A community-based 'street team' tobacco cessation intervention by and for youth and	No	Yes	Yes

young adults (Saw, 2018)				
47. The Neighborhood Strikes Back: Community Murals by Youth in Boston's Communities of Color (Sieber, 2012)	Yes	Yes	No	This was not a primary research study.
48. Toward a New Understanding of Community-Based Education: The Role of Community-Based Educational Spaces in Disrupting Inequality for Minoritized Youth (Baldridge, 2017)	Yes	Yes	No	This was not a primary research study.
49. For youth by youth: Innovative mental health promotion at Youth Net/Réseau Ado (Davidson, 2006)	Yes	Yes	No	This was not a primary research study.
50. Voice, Empowerment and Youth-Produced Films about "Gangs" (Blum-Ross, 2017)	No	Yes	Yes	
51. "I Am Much More than Just a Mum": Social Capital, Empowerment and Sure Start (Bagley, 2006)	Yes	Yes	Yes	This study did not include youth participants.
52. COLAGE: Providing Community, Education, Leadership, and Advocacy by and for Children of GLBT Parents (Kuvalanka, 2006)	Yes	Yes	No	This was not a primary research study.
53. Community-Based Participatory Research: Conducting a Formative Assessment of Factors that Influence Youth Wellness in the Hualapai Community (Teufel-Shone, 2006)	Yes	Yes	No	
54. Differing Profiles of Developmental Experiences Across	No	Yes	Yes	

Types of Organized Youth Activities (Larson, 2005)				
55. 'Keeping it real': An evaluation audit of five years of youth-led program evaluation (Bulanda, 2013)	Yes	Yes	No	This was not a primary research study.
56. Understanding aging-out of LGBTQ services in Chicago: A youth participatory action research project (Felner, 2017)	Yes	Yes	No	
57. Community-Based Theatre and Performance: Cultural Development and Democratic Dialogue (Woodson, year).	Yes	Yes	No	This was not a primary research study.
58. Our seat at the table: Mentorship, advocacy, & youth leadership in qualitative research (Pk, 2018)	Yes	Yes	No	This was not a primary research study.
59. Using community-based participatory research to identify potential interventions to overcome barriers to adolescents' healthy eating and physical activity (Goh, 2009)	Yes	Yes	No	
60. Examining the Meaning of Training Animals: A Photovoice Study with At-Risk Youth (Williams, 2014)	Yes	Yes	No	
61. The paradox of youth empowerment: Exploring youth intervention programme in Ghana (Ile, 2018)	Yes	Yes	No	
62. 'True stories from bare times on road': Developing empowerment, identity and social capital among urban minority	No	Yes	Yes	

ethnic young people in London, UK (Briggs, 2010)				
63. Mutual benefits: The lessons learned from a community based participatory research project with unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and foster carers (Rogers, 2018)	Yes	Yes	No	
64. Creating reasons to stay? Unaccompanied youth migration, community-based programs, and the power of 'push' factorsin El Salvador (Roth, 2018)	No	Yes	Yes	
65. Realidad Latina: Latino adolescents, their school, and a university use photovoice to examine and address the influence of immigration (Streng, 2004)	Yes	Yes	No	
66. Applying community-based participatory research principles to the development of a smoking-cessation program for American Indian teens: 'Telling our story' (Horn, 2008)	Yes	Yes	No	
67. Taking part in adolescent sexual health promotion in Peru: community participation from a social psychological perspective (Ramella, 2000)	Yes	Yes	No	This was not a primary research study.
68. The Process and Product: Crafting Community Portraits with Young People in Flexible Learning Settings (Baker, 2016)	Yes	Yes	No	

69. Using photovoice to identify perceived risk and protective factors for rural adolescent depression (Dempsey, 2014)	Yes	Yes	No	
70. Engaging adolescents through participatory and qualitative research methods to develop a digital communication intervention to reduce adolescent obesity (Livingood, 2017)	Yes	Yes	No	
71. A comparison of youth-driven and adult-driven youth programs: Balancing inputs from youth and adults (Larson, 2005)	No	Yes	Yes	This was not a primary research study.
72. Urban Youth Building Community: Social Change and Participatory Research in Schools, Homes, and Community-Based Organizations (Nygreen, 2006)	Yes	Yes	No	
73. Youth-Driven HIV Prevention Programmes in South Africa: Social Capital, Empowerment and Conscientisation (Macphail, 2006)	Yes	Yes	No	
74. The mystery of youth leadership development: The path to just communities (Libby, 2006)	Yes	Yes	No	This was not a primary research study.

75. A makerspace for all: Youth learning, identity, and design in a community-based makerspace (Shin, 2016)	No	Yes	Yes	
76. Youth Civic Engagement in Practice: The Youth VOICES Program (Ferman, 2005)	Yes		No	This was not a primary research study.
77. Opening selves, expanding worlds: Urban young women's experiences in a socialchange youth philanthropy program (Shartrand, 2005)	Yes	Yes	Yes	A copy could not be accessed despite contacting the author and accessing library databases through other institutions.
78. Perceptions of empowerment among youth and youth leaders in 4-H club settings. (Busing, 2004)	No	Yes	No	
79. Engaging Young Adolescents in Social Action through Photovoice: The Youth Empowerment Strategies (YES!) Project (Wilson, 2007)	Yes	Yes	No	
80. Photoethnographic methods of neighborhood assessment: Seeing the context through the child's perspective (Parks, 2002)	Yes	Yes	No	
81. Engaging Latino Youth in Community-Based Programs: Findings from the First Ten Years of the Oregon 4-H Latino Outreach Project (Hobbs, 2009)	No	Yes	No	

82. Lessons learned from a community-based participatory research mental health promotion program for American Indian youth. (Langdon, 2016)	Yes	Yes	No	
83. Ethnic Minority Youth in Youth Programs: Feelings of Safety, Relationships with Adult Staff, and Perceptions of Learning Social Skills (Lee, 2009)	No	Yes	Yes	
84. Picturing Adelante: Latino youth participate in CBPR using place-based photovoice (Cubilla-Batista, 2017)	Yes	Yes	No	
85. Bay Area Student Involvement in the Environmental and Food Justice Movements: A Narrative of Motivations, Experiences, and Community Impact (Solof, 2014)	Yes	Yes	No	
86. 'Hey, those are teenagers and they are doing stuff': Youth participation in community development (Thomas, 2013)	Yes	No	No	
87. Young People and Social Action: Youth Participation in the United Kingdom and United States (Arches, 2006)	Yes	Yes	Yes	This was not a primary research study.
88. Montreal Youth Use Their Voice to Transform Their Lives and Prevent Violence in Their Communities: A Discussion of the Leave Out Violence	Yes	Yes	Yes	This was not a primary research study.

Program (Lekes, 2007)			
89. ‘Healing spaces of refuge’: Social JusticeYouth Development, radical healing, and artistic expression forBlack youth. (Brown, 2016**)**	No	Yes	Yes
90. Photovoice: Capturing American Indian youths’ dietary perceptions and sharing behavior-changing implications. (Kelly, 2017)	Yes	Yes	No
91. Addressing teen dating violence within a rural community: A participatory action research study (Anderson, 2014)	Yes	Yes	No
92. Effects of photovoice on youth perceptions of healthy food access in the built environment (Gozalians, 2012)	Yes	Yes	No
93. Finding a voice: Participatory research with street-involved youth in the Youth Injection Prevention project (Coser, 2014)	No	Yes	Yes
94. Voices through cameras: Using photovoice to explore food justice issues with minority youth in East Harlem, New York (Leung, 2017)	Yes	Yes	No
95. Cirque du Monde in Mexico City: Breathing new life into action for young people in difficult situations. (Rivard, 2010)	No	Yes	No

96. Worth a thousand words: Conceptualizing adolescent female body image formation through Photovoice (Dromgoole, 2015)	Yes	Yes	No
97. Frameworks: A Community-Based Approach to Preventing Youth Suicide (Baber, 2009)	Yes	Yes	No
98. Action research intervention with young people: A city council's response (Selby, 2003)	Yes	Yes	No
99. A participatory youth empowerment model and qualitative analysis of student voices on power and violence prevention (Wong, 2008)	No	Yes	No
100. Features of the organized youth activity setting that protect against exposure to community violence (Burnside, 2015)	Yes	Yes	No
101. Neighborhood-Level Factors and Youth Violence: Giving Voice to the Perceptions of Prominent Neighborhood Individuals (Yonas, 2007)	Yes	Yes	No
102. Engaging war affected youth through photography: Photovoice with former child soldiers in Sierra Leone (Denov, 2012)	Yes	Yes	No
103. Using the Coproduction Principle: No More Throwaway Kids (Cahn, 2005)	No	Yes	No

104. Empowering immigrant youth in Chicago: Utilizing CBPR to document the impact of a youth health service corps program (Ferrera, 2015)	Yes	Yes	No
105. The geographical imagination of youth: Transformation through political participation and community engagement (Hung, 2010)	Yes	Yes	No
106. Combining Photovoice and focus groups: Engaging Latina teens in community assessment (Hannay, 2013)	Yes	Yes	No
107. Right to a healthy city? Examining the relationship between urban space and health inequity by Aboriginal youth artist-activists in Winnipeg (Skinner, 2013)	Yes	Yes	No
108. Taking back our streets: A clinical model for empowering urban youths through participation in peace promotion (Roche, 2011)	Yes	Yes	No
109. Social capital networks of institutional agents and the empowerment of African American youth (Gamble, 2007)	No	Yes	No
110. 'Bigger than hip-hop?' Impact of a community-based physical activity program on youth living in a disadvantaged neighborhood in	No	Yes	Yes

Canada (Beaulac, 2011)

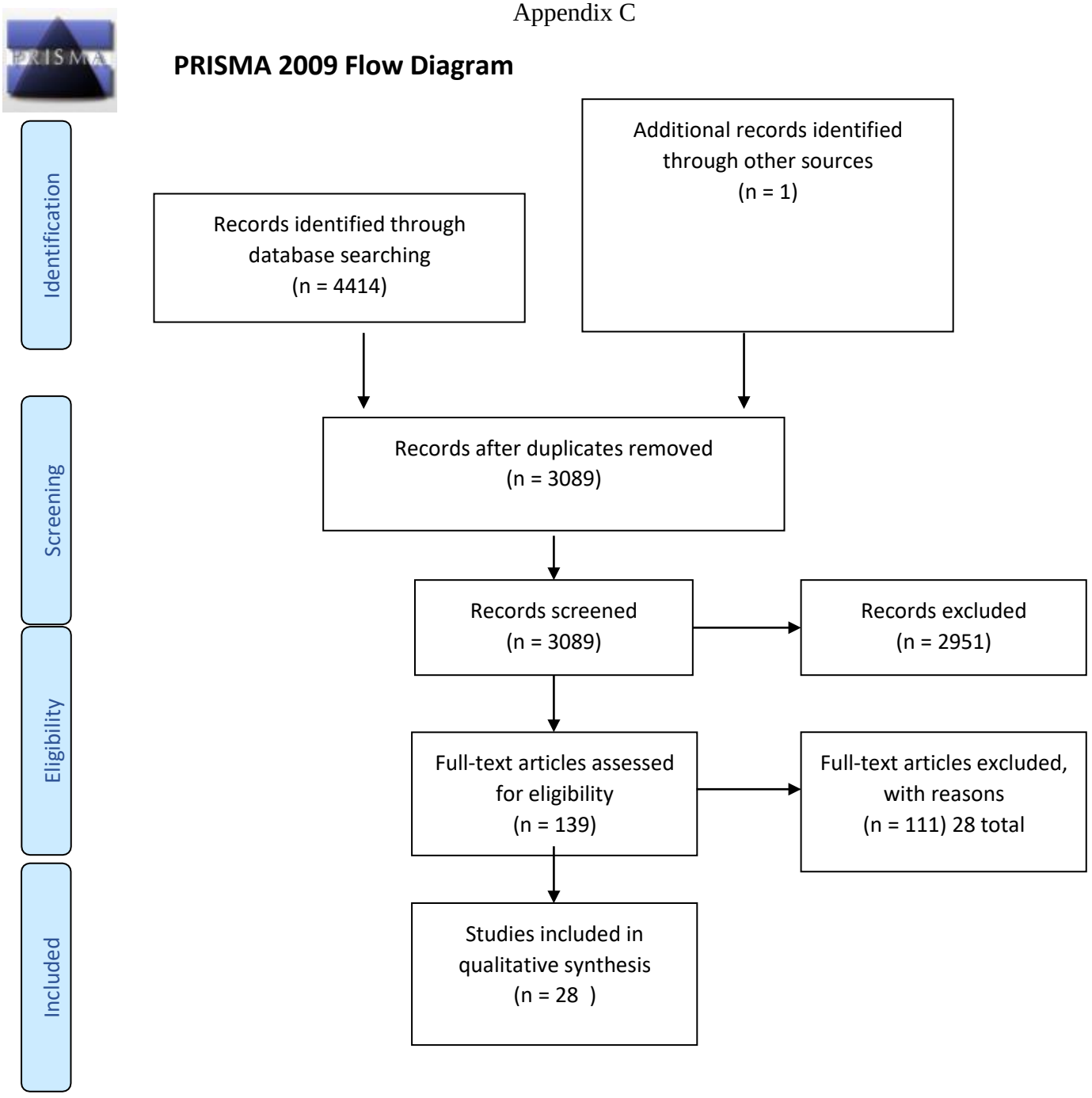
Appendix B

Articles Included in the Systematic Literature Review

1. Education for Liberation: A Precursor to Youth Activism for Social Justice (Atkinson,2012)
2. A Case Study of Peer Educators in a Community-Based Program to Reduce Teen Pregnancy: Selected Characteristics Prior to Training, Perceptions of Training andWork, and Perceptions of How Participation in the Program Has Affected Them (Beshers, 2007)
3. From program participant to engaged citizen: a developmental journey (Borden &Serido, 2009)
4. Engaging teenagers in suicide research through youth participatory action research(Bruck, 2018)
5. The Promise of an Accumulation of Care: Disadvantaged African-American Youths' Perspectives About What Makes an After School Program Meaningful (Bulanda & McCrea, 2013)
6. What do we know about out-of-school youths? How participatory action research canwork for young refugees in camps (Cooper, 2005)
7. Student Experiences of the Adolescent Diversion Project: A Community-BasedExemplar in the Pedagogy of Service-Learning (Davidson et al., 2010)
8. A Case Study Using Photovoice to Explore Racial and Social Identity Among YoungBlack Men: Implications for Social Work Research and Practice (Fisher-Borne & Brown, 2018)
9. Who Benefits From Community-Based Participatory Research? (Flicker, 2008)
10. Using Process Evaluation to Strengthen Intergenerational Partnerships in the YouthEmpowerment Solutions Program (Franzen et al., 2009)
11. "We actually care and we want to make the parks better": A qualitative study of youth experiences and perceptions after conducting park audits (Gallerani et al., 2017)
12. Speaking Out: Youth Led Research as a Methodology Used with Homeless Youth(Gomez & Ryan, 2016)
13. Developing a definition of youth empowerment: Youth's experiences ofempowerment and the role of collective involvement (Hinnant, 2002)
14. "Be creative and you will reach more people": Youth's experiences participating in an arts-based social action group aimed at mental health stigma reduction (Kennedy et al., 2018)
15. Transformative Learning of Refugee Girls Within a Community Youth OrganizationServing Southeast Asians in North Carolina (Kolano & Davila, 2019)
16. Youths As Partners in a Community Participatory Project for Substance UsePrevention (Kulbok et al., 2015)

17. ‘I felt that I was benefiting someone’: youth as agents of change in a refugeecommunity project (Makhoul et al., 2012)
18. Exploring youths’ perceptions of the hidden practice of youth work in increasing social capital with young people considered NEET in Scotland (Miller et al., 2015)
19. Peer Advocates for Health: A Community-Based Program to Improve ReproductiveHealth Knowledge and Lifestyle Choices among Adolescent Males (Mosena et al., 2004)
20. Empowering change agents: Youth organizing groups as sites for sociopoliticaldevelopment (Nicholas et al., 2019)
21. Learning to Speak Out About Racism: Youths’ Insights on Participation in an Intergroup Dialogues Program (Richards-Schuster & Aldana, 2013)
22. Creating Change from the Inside: Youth Development within a Youth CommunityOrganizing Program (Schwartz & Suyemoto, 2013)
23. An Applied Collaborative Training Program for Graduate Students in CommunityPsychology: A Case Study of a Community Project Working with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning Youth (Stanley, 2003)
24. ‘We are the ones asking the questions’: The experiences of young mental health service users conducting research into stigma (Taggart et al., 2013)
25. “We Created that Space with Everybody”: Constructing a Community-Based Space of Belonging and Familia in a Latina/o Youth Group. (Ventura, 2017)
26. New understandings of communities and ourselves: Community-based participatoryresearch with Alaska Native and Lower 48 youth (Weinronk et al., 2018)
27. How theater within a transformative organizing framework cultivates individual andcollective empowerment among LGBTQQ youth. (Wernick et al., 2014)
28. Service users as the key to service change? The development of an innovativeintervention for excluded young people (Zlotowitz et al., 2016)

Appendix C



From: Moher, D., Liberati, A., Tetzlaff, J., & Altman, D. G. (2009). Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses: The PRISMA Statement. *PLoS Medicine 6*(7) : e1000097

Appendix D

The Tavistock and Portman NHS
NHS Foundation Trust

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Research Focus

To explore the experiences of young people who have taken up Young Advisor (YA) or Youth Independent Advisory Group (YIAG) roles in their community.

Who is doing the research?

My name is Nicola Hoyne and I am studying for a doctorate qualification in Child, Educational and Community Psychology. I am doing this piece of research as part of that course.

Are you interested in taking part in this research?

I would be delighted for you to take part in my research study. This sheet provides all of the relevant information for you about this study, such as why it is being done and what you would need to do as part of it. Please spend time reading it through and then decide whether or not you would like to take part.

What is the aim of this research?

I am interested in exploring the experiences of young people who take up peer support and youth leadership roles in their communities.

Who has given permission for this research?

Your manager, [name omitted], has given permission for this research to take place, if you are happy to be involved. The training institution I am studying at is the Tavistock and Portman NHS Trust and they have also given ethical approval for this research to take place.

Who can take part in this research?

I am looking for individuals who have taken up YA or YIAG roles in their community. YA or YIAG members should have at least 6 months experience and they should be aged between 16 and 25.

Do you have to take part?

You do not have to take part and it is up to you to decide if you want to. This will not affect any work you do with YA or YIAG, either now or in the future.

What will you need to do?

You will be invited to meet with me for an individual interview, at a time that suits you, in a pre-booked room at the Town Hall. I will explain what we are going to do at the beginning of the meeting and then I will ask you about your experiences of your YA/YIAG role. The meeting will last approximately one hour and I will record it onto a digital voice recorder.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

There is not much research in this area and so this will be a new and hopefully exciting study into how young people experience peer support/youth leadership roles. Therefore, your views and ideas are really important in helping to understand more about this area.

What will happen to the findings from the research?

The findings will be typed up and will make up my thesis, which will be part of my Child, Educational and Community Psychology doctorate qualification. If you are interested, I would like to tell you about the findings. We can talk about the ways in which you would like to know about the findings such as me explaining them to you in person or sending them to you. I would also like to arrange a meeting with all of the young people who take part in the study so that you can have a chance totalk about the research and its findings together, and discuss possible ways that we can share the findings more widely.

What will happen if you don't want to carry on with this research?

During the interview, you can change your mind at any time and if you want to stop, you can leave without explaining why. Any information collected before your withdrawal may still be used, unless you request that it is destroyed. You also have the opportunity to withdraw from the study up to four weeks after your interview has been completed and your data will be destroyed. After the four weeks has lapsed, data analysis will likely have taken place, and if it has reached the point that the interview data has already been anonymised to the point that I can no longer retrieve it, I will not be able to remove your data but it will not be traceable to anyone, including me.

Will your taking part in this study be kept confidential?

Yes. I will follow ethical and legal practice and all information about you will be handled in confidence. All information that is collected will be kept strictly confidential. All records related to your participation in this research study will be handled and stored appropriately. Your identity on these records will be indicated by a pseudonym rather than by your name. The data will be kept fora minimum of 5 years. Data collected during the study will be stored and used in compliance withthe UK Data Protection Act (2018).

Are there times when your data cannot be kept confidential?

If you tell me something that makes me concerned about the safety of you or someone else then I might have to share that information with others in order to keep you or someone else safe. However, I would always aim to discuss this with you first when possible. Because I will be meeting with up to 8 young people, there is a chance that you may recognise some of the things you said in my research. To protect your identity, your name will be a pseudonym so that others are less likelyto be able to recognise you and what you said, however.

What happens if there is a problem?

At the end of the study you will have a chance to tell me what your experience of participating in the research was like. I will be available to you for up to 1 hour after the interview should any difficulties arise. Additionally, if difficulties arise at a later stage after the interview, a follow-up meeting can be arranged by contacting me at my email address - nicolahoyne@hotmail.com

What should you do if you want to take part?

If you feel happy to participate in the research study, please complete the consent form, including your contact details which will be used to arrange a date and time for the interview. You can return the completed form to me at the end of this meeting or you can send a scanned/photographed copy of the form to my email address (nicolahoyne@hotmail.com). Alternatively, you can give the completed consent form to [name omitted] at the Young Advisors Office.

Further information and contact details

If you have any questions or concerns about any aspect of the research, please contact me:

Email: nicolahoyne@hotmail.com

Telephone: 07415769606

You can also contact my research supervisor, Dr Adam Styles, who works for the Tavistock and Portman research department.

His contact details are:

Email: AStyles@Tavi-Port.ac.uk

Appendix E

The Tavistock and Portman NHS
NHS Foundation Trust

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Participant Consent Form

Research Focus

To explore the experiences of young people taking up Young Advisor (YA) or Youth Independent Advisory Group (YIAG) roles in their community.

Please initial the statements below if you agree with them:	**Initial here**
1. I have read and understood the information sheet and have had the chance to ask questions.	
2. I understand that my participation in this research is voluntary and I am free to withdraw at any time during the interview, and up to four weeks after the interview,without giving a reason.	
3. I agree for my interview to be recorded on a digital voice recorder.	
4. I understand that my data will be anonymised.	
5. I understand that this is a small-scale study, involving a small number of participants, so there is a chance that I may recognise some of the things that I said in the research.	
6. I understand that my interview will be used for this research and cannot be accessed for any other purpose.	
7. I understand that the findings from this research will be published and available for the public to read.	
8. I am willing to participate in this research.	

What YA/YIAG activities have you been involved with?

Your name	Signed	Date
_____	_____	___/___/____

How would you prefer to be contacted in order to arrange a date and time for the interview?

Email Yes/No Telephone Yes/No

Please provide your contact details:

_____

Researcher

Nicola Hoyne

Child, Educational and Community Psychologist

07415769606 nicolahoyne@hotmail.com

Appendix F

Interview Schedule

1. Can you tell me about your role with Young Advisors?
   Prompt: What kind of activities have you been involved with?
2. Can you tell me about how you ended up first getting involved with Young Advisors?
   Prompt: Can you tell me a bit about your life before? Why or how did you arrive at your decision to join? What motivated you? Did you have any life experiences that influenced your decision?
3. What did you expect Young Advisors to be like?
   Prompt: What was the source of those expectations (e.g. previous experiences of similar organisations or groups)? To what extent has Young Advisors been what you expected it to be?
4. Please tell me what Young Advisors (as an organisation) means to you now.
5. Please tell me what being a Young Advisor means to you.
6. For you, what is the best thing about Young Advisors?
   Prompt: What has been your best experience with Young Advisors? What happened? How did you feel?
7. Can you tell me a bit about any difficulties or challenges you've faced in your role?
   Prompt: Tell me about your worst experience with Young Advisors. What happened? How did you cope? How do you feel after a bad day in your role?
8. How has involvement with Young Advisors impacted on you and your life?
   Prompt: Do you think that Young Advisors has changed you, or the path of your life, in any way? Have you learned anything from it? Did you make any major changes in your life? How would your life be different if you hadn't joined Young Advisors?
9. How do other people view your work with Young Advisors?
   Prompt: How does your family view your work? How do your friends view your work? Has your involvement with Young Advisors changed how other people view you? How has it impacted on your relationships with other people?
10. Has your involvement with Young Advisors changed the way you think or feel about yourself? Prompt: Do you see yourself differently now compared to before you were involved with Young Advisors? In what ways? How do you feel about these changes?
11. Has your involvement with Young Advisors changed how you view your community?
12. How do you feel that you have impacted your community through your work with Young Advisors?
    Prompt: How has that made you feel?
13. Are there further changes that you would like to see in your community?
14. Are there are changes that you would like to see in Young Advisors as an organisation?
15. How do you see yourself in the future? Prompt: What are your plans for the future?

Appendix G

Outline of IPA Stages 1-6 (Smith et al., 2009)

Step 1: Listening and reading

The interviews were listened to and the transcripts read several times. According to Smith et al. (2009), the aim of this first stage is for the researcher to become actively engaged in the data and to ensure that the participant is the focus of analysis. Consistent with guidance provided by Smith et al. (2009), the researcher recorded some of her first impressions of the data, along with any significant recollections of the interview experience itself, to bracket them off until later in the analysis process.

Below is an exemplar of a section of an interview transcript, taken from Joshua's transcript.

So there's just sort of, I always tr- ... want to try and help out the community as much as I can, help out other people.
Mm-hmm (affirmative).
It's just... I think it's a really good way of doing it and ensuring that. Because thereare all these decisions that are going on that affect young people, but quite often young people aren't involved and they miss the mark.
Mm-hmm (affirmative).
Um, and I think having young people around those decisions really makes them much more effective, and it's been shown that sort of the effects of sort of having youth engagement is that it... There are much more effective, um, outcomes-
Mm-hmm (affirmative).
... for projects and stuff going on. (Lines 129-148)

Step 2: Initial note-taking

The data was read and listened to several times, both simultaneously and separately, allowing the researcher to observe any significant pauses, for example, or changes in tone, pace, or marked word emphasis. As recommended by Smith et al. (2009), each transcript was formatted into a table, with columns for the three forms of comments when note-taking (i.e., descriptive, linguistic, and conceptual) along with another column to detail emergent themes. Please see Appendix I for an excerpt from an analysed interview and Appendix J for a list of emergent themes for that interview.

a. Descriptive comments

As advised by Smith et al., (2009), the first of the three forms of initial notes taken were the descriptive comments. These consisted of comments summarising the content of what the participant said, focusing on the explicit meaning (i.e., "taking things at face value" (Smith et al., 2009, p.87)), and in general, using keywords, phrases or explanations articulated by the interviewee. These were recorded in the first column from the right in black text. For example, within Joshua's transcript, a descriptive comment was: "YA viewed as a good way of helping others and community. All these decisions are being taken that affect young people but youths are often not involved and the decision outcomes miss the mark. Involving youths in decision making leads to better projects and outcomes." (132-143)

b. Linguistic Comments

Note-taking then focused on linguistic comments, exploring the specific use of language by the respondent. These were recorded in the second column from the right in blue text. Attention was given to aspects such as language choice, along with repetition, pauses, laughter, tone, and level of fluency. For example, in Joshua's interview, a linguistic comment identified was: "really makes them much more effective" – emphasising the importance of youth engagement for better outcomes. (139-144)

c. Conceptual Comments

Thirdly, conceptual comments were the focus of note-taking. These comments looked at the data at a more interrogative and conceptual level, and they were recorded in the third column from the right in red text. An analytic focus was given to the implicit meanings of what the participants said. For example, in Joshua's transcript, a conceptual comment about his words was: "Self as a helper of others" (132).

Step 3: Identifying emergent themes

In the subsequent stage of analysis, the transcripts were explored for emergent themes, achieved by reducing the data volume generated from the transcription and the initial notes into a column of emergent themes positioned to the left of the transcript, in black text. Each theme was linked and referenced to the relevant lines in the transcription, which speak to that theme, to ensure that the essence of the text was reflected in the themes and that the complexity was preserved, in terms of mapping the connections, patterns, and interrelationships between the exploratory comments contained in the initial notes. This was following guidance from Smith et al. (2009, p92) who stated that "themes are usually expressed as phrases which speak to the psychological essence of the piece and contain enough particularity to be grounded and enough abstraction to be conceptual". The emergent themes were intended to reflect the researcher's interpretations of the participants' statements. Some of these themes were taken verbatim from the initial notes and some were paraphrased, particularly from the conceptual comments. The objective was to transform emergent themes into concise psychological statements.

The hermeneutic circle was applied by the researcher to identify emergent themes. As described by Smith et al. (2009), the hermeneutic concerns the dynamic, non-linear relationship between the part and the whole, at multiple levels; "to understand any given part, you look to the whole; to understand the whole, you look to the parts" (p.27). This was an iterative process of analysis, involving the researcher moving back and forth through many alternative ways of thinking about the data. The researcher paid close attention to what was expressed in the particular utterances while holding in mind the gestalt or entirety of the interview. In essence, the original whole of the interview became a set of parts as the analysis was conducted; however, these then came together in a different 'whole' at the end of the analysis. Below is an example of an emergent theme referenced to excerpts from Joshua's transcript.

Emergent Theme	Line numbers	Sample of quotes
2.Variation in role	19-20 42-43 51-54	There's quite a lot of different things, really, all sorts It's really varied. *Yeah.* I'm never really doing exactly the same thing.

Step 4: Development of subordinate themes

During the next stage of analysis, the emergent themes were clustered into subordinate themes, mapped or charted according to how the researcher considered that the themes fit together. Generating subordinate themes enables the researcher to push the analysis to a "higher level" (Smith et al., 2009, p.98). To facilitate this, the emergent themes were copied into a Microsoft Word document and grouped into related themes primarily using the four techniques, outlined below, suggested by Smith et al. (2009) for identifying subordinate themes.

a. Abstraction

The Abstraction technique involves the identification of patterns between emergent themes and grouping them under a shared concept or subordinate theme; "putting like with like and developing a new name for the cluster" (Smith et al., 2009, p.96). For example, in Joshua's transcript, the subordinate theme of "Promoting change for individuals in the community" was formed to explain the phenomenon, which seemed to underpin a group of emergent themes.

b. Subsumption

Subsumption is a technique where an emergent theme acquires a subordinate status as it brings together a series of related themes. For example, Joshua's subordinate theme of "Developing relationships with others" arose directly out of its emergent themes. Similarly, some subordinate theme titles developed into superordinate themes.

c. Polarisation

The technique of Polarisation involves the clustering of emergent themes with an oppositional relationship, focusing on difference instead of similarity.

d. Contextualisation

The Contextualisation technique involves the identification of cultural, temporal, and narrative components within the analysis of the data, useful in framing some of the morelocal understandings contained within an interview. This can include the grouping of incidents where particular processes or events are discussed and subsequently developing subordinate themes.

The process of grouping emergent themes into subordinate themes took time and careful consideration. Below is an example of a subordinate theme created within Joshua's transcript and its contributing emergent themes.

Subordinate theme:: A varied role

Emergent Theme Number	Emergent Themes
2.	Variation in role
11.	Providing a youth voice within the council
12.	YA as a helping role
66.	Centrality of meetings to the YA role
91.	Offering the youth perspective at council meetings
17.	Contributing to council scrutinies
7.	Helping out at community events
107.	Gathering community views through survey administration and other methods
92.	Sitting on a judging panel for applicants to an artistic redevelopment scheme
3.	Facilitating youth engagement and participation in the borough
94.	Working with the police and focusing on crime reduction

Step 5: Repeat the process for each transcript

Steps 1-4 were then repeated for each of the five remaining interview transcripts. Each transcript was analysed on its own, as advocated by Smith et al. (2009), to honour the individuality of each case and to keep with the idiographic commitment of IPA, and to allow for new themes to emerge. As far as possible, the researcher was required to bracket ideas emerging from the analysis of previous cases.

Step 6: Look for patterns across cases to develop superordinate themes

The researcher then looked for patterns and connections across cases and the group as a whole. Subordinate themes from the individual transcripts were combined and arranged into clusters of related concepts. Superordinate themes were then created for related subordinate themes. To preserve the connection with the transcripts, each superordinate theme was referenced back to its representative emergent and subordinate themes.

Appendix H

Data Trail and Frequency of Thematic Findings

1. Data Trail

The table below details the data trail for the data analysis included in the appendices.

Data Analysis Stage (based on Smith et al., 2009)	Appendix Content	Appendix
Stages 1-3: Reading, initial notes, and emergent themes	An interview transcription excerpt (Joshua) with initial notes and emergent themes	Appendix I
Stage 4: Emergent themes	The emergent themes for Joshua	Appendix J
Stage 5: Subordinate themes	The emergent to subordinate themes for Joshua	Appendix K
Stage 6: Subordinate themes for the other participants	The emergent to subordinate themes for the other five participants	Appendices L, M, N, O, and P
Stage 7: Superordinate Themes	Overview of the data trail for each superordinate theme	Appendix H

2. Frequency of Thematic Findings

Stage 7 yielded six superordinate themes originating from all six transcripts. Fifteen of the subordinate themes, meanwhile, derived from all six transcripts, one subordinate theme was derived from five transcripts, three subordinate themes from four transcripts, eight subordinate themes from three transcripts, three subordinate themes from two transcripts, and two subordinate themes from one transcript each. The table below shows the frequency of occurrence of each theme for each participant.

Superordinate Theme A: Conceptualisation of the YA role						
Subordinate Themes	Jack	Chloe	Joshua	Megan	Emily	Charlotte
A varied role	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Promoting change for individuals in the community	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Affecting Change at a systemic level	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
A flexible and youth-led working model	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Superordinate Theme B: YA and the construct of self						

Subordinate Themes	Jack	Chloe	Joshua	Megan	Emily	Charlotte
Negative self-concept pre-YA involvement	✓			✓		
Journey into YA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
YA as a significant turning point in life	✓					
Impact of YA on current view of self	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ageing out of YA as a threat to identity	✓					✓
Conceptualising the future self	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Superordinate Theme C: Personal growth through YA involvement						
Subordinate Themes	Jack	Chloe	Joshua	Megan	Emily	Charlotte
Building skills and competencies	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Aiding future career prospects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Developing relationships with others	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Superordinate Theme D: Factors attributed to the effectiveness of the role						
Subordinate Themes	Jack	Chloe	Joshua	Megan	Emily	Charlotte
Youth-led approach	✓		✓		✓	✓
Preventative approach	✓			✓	✓	
Directly engaging with community members	✓	✓		✓		✓
Organisational factors		✓		✓		✓
Power situated within the YA role			✓	✓	✓	✓
Peer-to-peer support		✓			✓	✓
Superordinate Theme E: Challenges in role						
Subordinate Themes	Jack	Chloe	Joshua	Megan	Emily	Charlotte
Difficulties arising during street work	✓		✓	✓		
YA positioning in relation to the council	✓	✓	✓			
Difficulties in youth-adult community collaborations	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Organisational factors		✓			✓	✓
Limitations in the power of the YA role					✓	
Relationship difficulties					✓	✓
Time			✓	✓		✓
Superordinate Theme F: Factors contributing to continued involvement						
Subordinate Themes	Jack	Chloe	Joshua	Megan	Emily	Charlotte
Quality of the YA work	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Within person factors	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Views and behaviours of others	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Organisational factors	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Power of the YA role	✓			✓		✓
Motivated by addressing particular community issues	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Appendix I

IPA Stages 1-3 – Excerpt of Joshua's Analysed Transcript

Exploratory Comments Code: Black= Descriptive Comments, Blue= Linguistic Comments and Red= Conceptual Comments

Emergent Themes	Line	Transcript	Descriptive Comments	Linguistic Comments	Conceptual Comments
57. Perceives self as offering a helpful contribution at meetings when giving the youth perspective on community change efforts 58. Assigning positive attributions to adult stakeholders in the community 59. Adult stakeholders as out of touch with young people 60. Society as rapidly changing 61. Essential nature of YA offering the youth perspective to adults in community decision-making	252 253 254 255 256 257 258 259 260 261 262 263 264 265 266 267 268 269 270 271 272 273 274 275 276 277	quite helpful, sort of the discussions and sort of letting the adults know what's really going on. 'Cause there, there's a bitof a bubble, really. They're not entirely sure what's going on. They're just sort of guessing, trying to put themselves in ourshoes. *Yeah.* But I think even if it has only been five, 10 years since they were sort of a young person- *Mm-hmm (affirmative).* ... There's still been massive changes with technology and sort of the ways that we work as a society. And I think it's just because it's changing so rapidly, I think that's why it's so vital- *Yeah.* ... to have, have youth engagement. *Yeah. Um, what does Young Advisors as an organisation mean to you?* Ooh. Um, I think it's a place where I feel Ican be, uh, able to give back to the community, um, and to have a say in how it functions a bit, um, and just sort of feel like I'm participating in how it grows and	Perceives self to be helpful in meetings when able to speak up about what's going on for young people. Adults not sure what's going on – guessing, trying to put themselves in youths' shoes Age differences between adults and youths leading to misunderstandings – massive changes in short amount of time owing to technology and changes in the way society works. Changing so rapidly. That's why youth engagement is so vital. YA offers self a means to give back to the community and have	Bubble – who's inside and who's outside the bubble? Non- transparent bubble – can't be seen through Massive, rapid changes – imagery of size and speed – adults cannot keep up (even with the best intentions / will in the world) A bit hesitant (not fluent) - putting thought into response? Or a lot to process and explain – a big question to answer? Feel like I'm participating – interesting choice of words – rather than I can participate...	Trying...and failing? Attributes adults with positive intentions Growing divide between adults and youths – adults cannot bridge the divide – YA members act as a bridge – to offer perspective into the youth world Necessity of youth engagement (YA) Is YA the only method of youth engagement? Importance of YA to sense of self – to give back, to have a voice in community matters / development, participate vs feel I'm participating – feel empowered?

Appendix J

IPA Stage 3 – Emergent Themes for Joshua's Transcript

1.Mostly works through YIAG 2.Variation in role 3. Providing a youth voice within the council 4. Insider positioning within the council 5. Offering the youth perspective at community development meetings 6.YA impacting changes to community service delivery 7. Helping out at community events 8.Streetbase youth engagement programme 10.Working on the climate emergency 9.Gathering youth views on specific topics by administering surveys throughout the borough 11. Facilitating youth engagement and participation in the borough 12. YA as a helping role 13.YA involved with council scrutinies on different topics 14.YA members choosing to participate in meetings based on their interests 15. Personal interest in children and families work 16.Having a lot to say about children and families 17. Contributing to council scrutinies 18.YA role at scrutinies 19. Difficulty understanding some technical language and other content used during	YA work as interesting 89.Gathering community views on the street through administration of surveys 90.Working on climate change 91. Offering the youth perspective at council meetings 92. Sitting on a judging panel for applicants to an artistic redevelopment scheme 93.YA involvement in mental health 94. Working with the police and focusing on crime reduction 95.YA in position of power to influence changes to police service delivery/practice 96.YA work developing understanding and relationships between youth and police 97. Fractured relationship between police and youth 97.YA offering a respectful and constructive means of criticising authority figures 98.Being listened to by people in power 99. YA as an effective and constructive means of exercising youth agency and critical voice in community service delivery 100.YA offering youth an effective voice in community matters / service delivery 101.Involvement in art events through YA role 102. Self as an art student 103.Pursuing own interests through YA role	168. Community misconceptions about the YA role 169.Perceives self as having an impact and contributing to better outcomes for youths in borough 170.Having an impact and contributing to better outcomes for youths in borough through YA role 171. Influencing decision-making through conversations with adult stakeholders at community meetings 172.Developing confidence through YA role 173. Developing local area knowledge 174.Power and impact of the YA role 175a. Developing consideration and understanding for other community members' struggles and experiences 175b.Developing community understanding through YA role 176.Developing understanding of how young people can impact community change through YA role 177. Reducing own personal biases and misconceptions of others 178.Gaining an understanding of other people's experiences 179. Developing ability to better support other people's mental health

council meetings and scrutinies. 20. Interested in learning about the systemic workings of the borough and enjoys attending meetings 21. Previous involvement in peer support roles 22.Self as a helper of others 23. A personal interest in youth mental health 24. School staff member recommending involvement with YA 25.Taking up YA role as a Youth Mental Health Ambassador 26. Influencing changes to community service delivery in schools, police and mental health services 27. Promoting youth mental health 28. Self-identifying as part of the YAcommunity 29. Intrinsically motivated to help others 30.The caring self 31. YA as a good way of helping others and community 32. Risks of not including youths in decision-making that affects them 33. Involving youths in decisions that affect them leads to better outcomes 34. Personal desire to improve community 35.Benefits of youth engagement in community decision making 36. Crime aspect to YA work 37. Forging connections with YA members coming from different backgrounds	104.Experiening and getting involved with the borough through YA role 105.Engaging with the community through YA role 106. Enjoyment in YA role and activities 107. Gathering community views through survey administration and other methods 108. Valuing connection and direct engagement with other community members 109.Having fun through YA role 110. Feeling intimidated talking to people in authority 111.Difficulty communicating ideas at meetings / with other people 112a. The shy self 113a. Overcoming communication difficulties to offer contributions at meetings with adult stakeholders 112b. Building self- confidence 113b. Valuing the opportunity to build self-confidence through YA role 114. YA pushing self out of comfort zone to develop and realise capabilities 115. Developing communication skills 116. Important to self to be authentic and to make a worthwhile contribution 117.Some prevailing difficulties contributing ideas at meetings with adult stakeholders 118. Support from adult allies to facilitate youth contributions at community meetings 119. Not always feeling have something valid to add	180. An embedded view of self as a helper of others 181.Helping those less fortunate through YA role 182.Being consulted about school mental health provision through YA role 183.History of involvement in peer support roles 183.The fortunate self 184. Self as having greater understanding of local community 185.Enjoys living in borough 186.Self as long-term resident 187.Borough as leading on youth engagement and tackling community issues 188.Slow nature of community change 189.Confident in capacity of YA to achieve community change (belief in the system) 190. Developing trust and compassion towards community decision-makers 191.Public frustration with community decision-makers 192. Developing understanding of community change processes and barriers to community change 193. Talk as a tool for changing perspectives of community members 194.Developing an understanding of the barriers to community change 195. Money as a barrier to community

38. Personal knowledge and interest in school related YA work 39. LGBT issues and other problems of prejudice and discrimination in the community 40. YA members can choose work related to own interests and passions 46.YA allowing members to focus on their interests/ passions 41.Experienced a couple of attacks on street (influenced decision to join YA) 43. Personal attacks experienced on street acting as personal motivation to facilitate social change and join YA 42.Victim of crime 44. Passionate about social change and specific community issues 45. YA work as interesting 47. Motivated to engage in community change efforts to make the borough safer for residents 48.Involved with YA two years 49. YA as a casual and informal work environment 50. YA as self-selecting and flexible working style 51. YA as predominantly youth-led 52. YA manager as the only adult 53.Youths and young adults involved in key YA roles 54. Youths in positions of power and influence within YA	120. Enjoys making contributions at community stakeholder meetings 121. Difficulty recalling negative experiences at YA 122. Feeling cold and miserable completing street surveys in poor weather conditions 123. Being required to obtain permission to survey in some community areas 124. YA as a good income resource 125.Primarily motivated by character enriching experiences offered by YA 126.YA given self greater depth and understanding of own community 127.Achieving an enriched character through YA experience 128. An enriched self with greater depth 129. A history of civic mindedness 130.YA given self the tools and understanding to address community issues 131. Knowledge and understanding developed through YA has led to benefits in everyday life 132. Producing better art as a result of YA involvement 133. Developing empathy for others 134.Producing art as a form of social commentary 135. Poverty in the borough 136. Climate change 137.Seeing the consequences of poverty and other social issues through YA experiences 138.Having experience with homeless people	change 196. Lack of funding and resources leading to increased community violence Financial constraints 197. Lack of community awareness about the barriers to change 198. Impact of government socio-economic policies on community 199. Gradual nature of community change 200. The feel-good factor of impacting positive change for others and for the community 201. Impacting change at the individual level 202. Expecting long-term community gains from YA work 203. Importance of improving youth mental health 204. Hoping for reductions in youth violence and improved safety in the borough as a result of YA work 205. At-risk youths and mental health 206.Desire to help improve youth mental wellbeing 207. Motivated to develop a more inclusive society and to address problems of prejudice and discrimination in the community 208. Realistic about time needed impact community change 209. Motivated to ensure that community members are happier and safer

55. Influence of the YA contribution in community meetings 56. Some difficulty speaking up and contributing ideas at meetings 57. Perceives self as offering a helping contribution through YA role 58.Assigning positive attributions to adult stakeholders in the community 59. Adult stakeholders as out of touch with young people 60. Society as rapidly changing 61. YA members compensating for adult stakeholders lack of understanding of the zeitgeist and youth culture 62. YA as a means of giving back to the community 63. Self as an agent of community change 64. YA increasing sense of connection and belonging to local community 65.Impacting community change through participation in council meetings 66. Centrality of meetings to the YA role 67. Supporting individual community members through involvement with community events 68.Enjoying direct engagement with community members 69.Personal satisfaction in giving back to community 72. Ideas for change getting diluted and warped over time 70.Meetings as good for generating ideas and	in borough through YA 139.Importance to self to be authentic 140. Developing understanding of community issues through YA involvement 141.Rising levels of homelessness in borough 142.Obvious indicators of poverty in borough 142. Persistent problems of youth violence and knife crime 143.Lack of opportunities and amenities for youth in borough 144. Lack of support for students at school and inadequate behaviour policies 145.Linking youth violence with lack of youth services and opportunities and inadequate school support 146. Nurturing environment and reduction in exclusions needed at school to help look after young people 147. Lack of community resources and funding, stemming from government social economic policies, exacerbating community problems 148. Self as politically minded 149.Adopting a systemic lens to the factors contributing to community problems 150.Taking a critical, discerning lens to media representations 151. Streetbase youth engagement service tackling youth crime in borough 152. Engaging with vulnerable and at-risk youths through Streetbase and signposting them to local services and activities	210. Need to raise community awareness about YA 211. Potential to further develop YA as a liaison between the council and the community 212. The altruistic self 213. Need to develop community awareness amongst community members 214.Future self as an artist 215. Long term commitment to YA and to social justice 216.Committed to YA and social justice 217.Balancing YA with other time commitments 218. Forming connections to facilitate future community work opportunities 219. YA as a pathway to working within the council 220.Envisioning a future working in community development 221.YA increasing opportunities for future self 222. Developing employability and gaining relevant work experience for future community development jobs YA as a steppingstone to future work in community development 223. Engaged with the work of YA 224.Expecting to need a job supporting self as an artist in early career 225. Envisions engaging in further community development work after YA to

conversations 71.Slow nature of systemic change 73. Directly engaging with community members 74.A moral obligation to support others less fortunate 75. An awareness of other peoples‘ suffering 76. Grateful for own circumstances and aware of own privilege 77. Satisfaction and feel good factor of giving back to the community Importance to self to give back 78.Intrinsic motivation to help others 79.Self as a helper of others 80. A history of inclination to help others 81.A history of helping others 82. YA offering self a connection and sense of belonging to the community 83. YA offering the opportunity to help others 85. Feeling empowered by having a say in the workings of the borough 84.Importance to self to give back 86.Feels good having an impact on the community 87. Affecting multi-level community change through role 88. Variation in YA activities as a very positive aspect of role	153.Vulnerable and at-risk youths in borough 154.Engaging with youths in borough 155.Signposting youths to local services and helping to fuel their passions and take them off the streets / reducing youth violence 156.Mindful of own privilege and reluctant to make assumptions about others’ experiences 157.Limitations of YA scope in tackling some community problems 158. YA not in a position to tackle poverty 159. Supporting individuals experiencing the consequences of poverty 160. Need for governmental action to tackle poverty 161. YA having a say in meetings We community belonging theme 162.Developing greater community awareness through YA involvement 164. Self as a voice for the council in the community 163. Raising community awareness through conversations with own social circle 165. Self as viewing own community through a more favourable lens as a result of YA involvement 166.Family interest in YA work 167. YA as a job	support future self as an artist 226. Developing understanding of own community and community systems through YA work 227. Optimistic about the future development of the community 228. A long-term resident who loves living in the borough 229.Long term resident 230. A sense of belonging to the local community

Appendix K

IPA Stage 4 – Emergent Themes Organised into Subordinate Themes for Joshua's Transcript

A varied role	**Journey into YA**
2.Variation in role	21.Previous involvement in peer support roles
3.Providing a youth voice within the council	80.A history of inclination to help others
12.YA as a helping role	129.A history of civic mindedness
66.Centrality of meetings to the YA role	24.School staff member recommending involvement with YA
91.Offering the youth perspective at council meetings	43.Personal attacks experienced on street acting as personal motivation to facilitate social change and join YA
17.Contributing to council scrutinies	**Impact of YA on current view of self**
7.Helping out at community events	230.A sense of belonging to the local community
107.Gathering community views through survey administration and other methods	22.Self as a helper of others
92.Sitting on a judging panel for applicants to an artistic redevelopment scheme	148.Self as politically minded
11.Facilitating youth engagement and participation in the borough	44.Passionate about social change and specific community issues
94.Working with the police and focusing on crime reduction	116.Important to self to be authentic and to make a worthwhile contribution
Promoting change for individuals in the community	57.Perceives self as offering a helping contribution through YA role
87.Affecting multi-level community change through role	28.Self identifying as part of the YA community
83.YA offering the opportunity to help others	227.Optimistic about the future development of the community
201.Impacting change at the individual level	180.An embedded view of self as a helper of others
73.Directly engaging with community members	128.An enriched self with greater depth
152.Engaging with vulnerable and at-risk youths through Streetbase and signposting them to local services and activities	164. Self as a voice for the council in the community
67.Supporting individual community members through involvement with community events	63.Self as an agent of community change
159.Supporting individuals experiencing the consequences of poverty	165. Self as viewing own community through a more favourable lens as a result of YA involvement
Affecting change at a systemic level	**Conceptualising the future self**
5.Offering the youth perspective at community development meetings	215.Long term commitment to YA and to social justice
26.Influencing changes to	214.Future self as an artist
	225.Envisions engaging in further community development work after YA to support future self as an artist

community service delivery in schools, police and mental health services 27.Promoting youth mental health 10.Working on the climate emergency **A flexible and youth-led working model** 51.YA as predominantly youth-led 52.YA manager as the only adult 54.Youths in positions of power and influence within YA 50.YA as self-selecting and flexible working style 40.YA members can choose work related to own interests and passions 49.YA as a casual and informal work environment **Youth-led approach** 33.Involving youths in decisions that affect them leads to better outcomes 61.YA members compensating for adult stakeholders lack of understanding of the zeitgeist and youth culture **Power situated within the YA role** 4.Insider positioning within the council 55.Influence of the YA contribution in community meetings 99.YA as an effective and constructive means of exercising youth agency and critical voice in community service delivery 171.Influencing decision-making through conversations with adult stakeholders at community meetings 193.Talk as a tool for changing perspectives of community members 163.Raising community awareness through conversations with own social circle	**Building skills and competencies** 114.YA pushing self out of comfort zone to develop and realise capabilities 112.Building self-confidence 115.Developing communication skills 226.Developing understanding of own community and community systems through YA work 140.Developing understanding of community issues through YA involvement 184.Self as having greater understanding of local community 192.Developing understanding of community change processes and barriers to community change 173.Developing local area knowledge 133. Developing empathy for others 177.Reducing own personal biases and misconceptions of others 179.Developing ability to better support other people's mental health **YA aiding future career prospects** 167.YA as a job 222.Developing employability and gaining relevant work experience for future community development jobs 218.Forming connections to facilitate future community work opportunities 219.YA as a pathway to working within the council 132.Producing better art as a result of YA involvement **Developing relationships with others** 64.YA increasing sense of connection and belonging to local community 37.Forging connections with YA members coming from different backgrounds 175a.Developing consideration and understanding for other community members' struggles and experiences 190.Developing trust and compassion towards community decision-

Difficulties arising during street work 122. Feeling cold and miserable completing street surveys in poor weather conditions 123. Being required to obtain permission to survey in some community areas **YA positioning in relation to the council** 168.Community misconceptions about the YA role 210.Need to raise community awareness about YA 211.Potential to further develop YA as a liaison between the council and the community **Difficulties in youth-adult community collaborations** 19.Difficulty understanding some technical language and other content used during council meetings and scrutinies. 56.Some difficulty speaking up and contributing ideas at meetings 113.Overcoming communication difficulties to offer contributions at meetings with adult stakeholders 110.Feeling intimidated talking to people in authority 119.Not always feeling have something valid to add 118.Support from adult allies to facilitate youth contributions at community meetings 72.Ideas for change getting diluted and warped over time 195.Money as a barrier to community change **Time** 217.Balancing YA with other time commitments 199.Gradual nature of community change	makers **Quality of the YA work** 45.YA work as interesting 223.Engaged with the work of YA 88.Variation in YA activities as a very positive aspect of role 106.Enjoyment in YA role and activities 20.Interested in learning about the systemic workings of the borough and enjoys attending meetings. 121.Difficulty recalling negative experiences at YA **Within person factors** 29.Intrinsically motivated to help others 212.The altruistic self 76.Grateful for own circumstances and aware of own privilege 75.An awareness of other peoples‘ suffering 74.A moral obligation to support others less fortunate 200.The feel-good factor of impacting positive change for others and for the community 108.Valuing connection and direct engagement with other community members 113.Valuing the opportunity to build self-confidence through YA role 85.Feeling empowered by having a say in the workings of the borough **Views and behaviours of others** 166.Family interest in YA work **Organisational factors** 124.YA as a good income resource **Motivated by addressing particular community issues** 135.Poverty in the borough 141.Rising levels of homelessness in borough 143.Lack of opportunities and amenities for youth in borough 205.At-risk youths and mental health

	142.Persistent problems of youth violence and knife crime 97.Fractured relationship between police and youth 144.Lack of support for students at school and inadequate behaviour policies 39. LGBT issues and other problems of prejudice and discrimination in the community 136.Climate change 47.Motivated to engage in community change efforts to make the borough safer for residents Community safety as an ongoing problem 23.A personal interest in youth mental health 15.Personal interest in children and families work 38.Personal knowledge and interest in school related YA work

Appendix L

IPA Stage 4 – Emergent Themes Organised into Subordinate Themes for Jack's Transcript

A varied role	**Youth-led approach**
3.Facilitating the council in community decision-making	20.Youth-led approach allows for greater access to youth in the community
Advocating for young people	17.Youth-led approach of YA compensating for council limitations
12.Streetbase youth engagement programme	28.Power of sharing positive personal youth accounts
10.Community events	50.Empathising through shared youth experiences
44.Completing surveys	YA members as holders of insider knowledge
109.Interviewing applicants for council roles	**Preventative approach**
Peer training	237.Value of preventative work
66.Deputy Youth Mayor position	211.Cumulative gains from YA preventative work
Promoting change for individuals in the community	244.YA membership as a positive alternative to gang involvement
Engaging with youths in the community and signposting them to local services based on their interests	**Directly engaging with community members**
Affecting change at a systemic level	16.Direct engagement a key component of YA role
Influencing community service provision for youths through YA role	Prioritising youth interaction
Influencing community decisions and appointments of adults to influential roles within the community	25.Youth preference for face-to-face communication
A flexible and youth-led working model	22.Value of word of mouth over other methods of communication
YA interview process as youth-led and peer-to-peer	
Flexibility to exert personal agency in role and to adapt service delivery based on individual needs	**Difficulties arising during street work**
	231.Safety risks posed by gang activity in borough
	38.Difficulty engaging some youths
Negative self-concept pre-YA involvement	**YA positioning in relation to the council**
35. Creating distance with old self	46.Dissonance between insider and outsider positioning of YA members
324.Unsuccessful in education	345.Confusion in understanding of others in community
385.Emotional difficulties	**Difficulties in youth-adult community collaborations**
49.Relationship difficulties	309.Reliance on adult stakeholders to achieve community change
75.Perceiving self to be viewed negatively by others	282.Adult community stakeholders making decisions for young
Journey into YA	

78.School difficulties negatively impacting life enjoyment and participation	people without consulting them
84.Feeling lost and unsupported	308.Fracturing of trust in youth-adult collaborative relationships
323.On a troubled path	299.Pattern of disappointments
YA as a significant turning point in life	300.Apathy breeding apathy
67.YA as life changing	304.Frustrated by unsuccessful youth-adult collaborations
321.Hard to contemplate life without YA	305.Frustrated by time wasting and perceiving that youth time is under-valued by adult stakeholders
229.Opening up horizons	274.Difficulty when not being taken seriously by adult stakeholders
73.YA changing perspective on life	293.Feeling let down and disregarded by adult stakeholders
317.Offering hope and opportunities	295.Negative experiences impacting future collaborations
240.YA aiding self-actualisation	
Impact of YA on current view of self	**Quality of the YA work**
387.YA altering self-view	398.Abundance of interesting activities
168.Developing a strong individual identity	40. Positives outweighing the negatives in the role
337.Developing a caring self	335.YA leading to new experiences and learning opportunities for self
342.Self as helper of others	176.Having a purpose in YA work
139.Self as advocate for own community area	268. YA experiences as fun and enjoyable
127.Self-identifies as making positive change in the community	**Within person factors**
169.Perceives self as being a valued contributor within YA	314.YA giving sense of belonging
265.Ambitious	316.YA giving something to look forward to
379.Central figure in own community	249.Pride in achievements and contributions towards positive community change
364.Self as role-model for others	179.Feeling valued and listened to
Ageing out of YA as a threat to identity	104.Intrinsic motivation developed over time
32.Growing older	48.Identification with disaffected youths
36.Losing touch with target youth	**Views and behaviours of others**
34.Reappraising self	Takes pleasure in impressing others
414.Transitioning out of YA	374.Increasingly recognised and respected by others in the community
410.Striving to hold onto identity	248.Gaining status in the community
411.Seeking to raise age limit	356.Perceiving that others see self as knowledgeable
417.Uncertainty and hope for the future	
Conceptualising the future self	
254.YA reframing construct of future self	

418.Ongoing commitment to community action and to empowering others 341.Aims to develop community participation 153.Ideas for improving community resources 155.Ideas to foster further sense of community **Building skills and competencies** 195.Acquiring knowledge 193.Receiving training and developing qualifications 391.Increasing self-awareness 388.Developing skills in communication and emotional expression 62.Developing responsibility 71.Developing time management and work readiness skills 189.Developing first aid skills 190.Developing skills in CPR 329.Developing political awareness and involvement 107.Developing community awareness and participation **YA aiding future career prospects** 276.YA members viewed as professionals 72.Developing work readiness skills 187.Enhancing CV 315.Gaining experience to enhance future career options **Developing relationships with others** 378.Increasing social network 373.Improving relationships 378.Fostering connections to local services Forging connections across diversity 105.Becoming more involved within the local community 339.Enhancing sense of community	358.Viewed by peers as holding a position of authority **Power of the YA role** YA offering a platform for youths to advocate for young people in the borough 131.YA members viewed as youth experts 28.YA contribution valued by local stakeholders in community decision-making 349.Family pride in YA work **Organisational factors** 97.Initially incentivised by financial gain 312.YA offering stability and structure 174.Clarity and confidence in YA role and responsibilities **Motivated by addressing particular community issues** 143. Frustrated by perceived marginalisation of own community area and unequal distribution of borough resources 160.Passionate about helping local community 136.Lack of amenities for youths in borough 395.Lack of opportunities for youths in borough 372.Strives for community members to feel safe in the borough Development in the borough not benefitting community members (gentrification)

Appendix M

IPA Stage 4 – Emergent Themes Organised into Subordinate Themes for Chloe's Transcript

A varied role 110.Supporting youths to engage with their community and council and to realise their capabilities 33.Working on social issues through YA 127.Gathering information to contribute to community change efforts Prevention and intervention work 125.Directly engaging with youths in the community 17.Supporting delivery of community events 145.Providing the youth perspective to community development projects 4.Working with different partner organisations **Promoting change for individuals in the community** 9.Promoting community participation amongst individuals in the community **Affecting change at a systemic level** 113.Influencing local service delivery 16.Supporting systemic changes for youths in the borough at a policy and service development level 215.Representing the borough at a local government level 213.Working and impacting change at a national charity level **A flexible and youth-led working model** 122. Youth-led nature of YA role 78.Flexibility afforded in role **Journey into YA** Own experience of economic and social disadvantage **Impact of YA on current view of self**	**Directly engaging with community members** 87.Speaking with community members to find out what they want 144.Dangers of not consulting community members in community change efforts **Organisational factors** 108.Support systems in place 105.YA manager considered as supportive and easily accessible 89.YA lanyards and clothing granting authority Doing high profile work to put YA on the map **Peer-to-peer support** 107.Peer support from other YA members **YA positioning in relation to the council** 90.Responsibility inherent in the YA role 186.Lack of clarity and dissonance regarding YA positioning in relation to the council **Difficulties in youth-adult community collaborations** 148.Feeling daunted when not treated as equal project partners 149.Tokenisation and not being listened to by adult stakeholders **Organisational factors** 221.Lack of cohesion between YA franchises at regional levels 212.Ideas to develop YA at a national charity level **Quality of the YA work** 21.Enjoyment in role 140.YA roles and experiences as overwhelmingly positive 79.Abundance of interesting and worthwhile projects 122. Youth-led nature of YA role

170.Importance of YA to sense of self 189.YA increasing visibility of self 191.Re-evaluating own capabilities as a result of YA involvement 10.YA pushing self out of comfort zone 117.Empowering self 112.Developing the confident self 65.Self as doing great things 165. YA aiding self-actualisation 67.Standing out from the crowd 184.YA altering other people's view of self **Conceptualising the future self** 77.Long term commitment to YA 222.Long-term commitment to social justice and to helping others past YA involvement 56. Lifelong ambition to become a lawyer 225.Views future self as being in a privileged position **Building skills and competencies** 162.Developing qualifications and receiving training through YA involvement 35.Learning empathy and understanding of others 174.Developing resilience 192.Developing confidence 172.Developing public speaking skills 183.Developing organisational skills 182.Developing time management skills 93.Developing communication and interpersonal skills 26.YA teaching functional skills not learned at school 94.Developing safety awareness and learning how to manage difficult situations	78.Flexibility afforded in role **Within person factors** 49.Innate curiosity in learning about the experiences of others 84.Social motivations 157.Valuing diverse connections formed 67.Pride in own achievements 20.Feeling successful in role **Views and behaviours of others** 74.Others impressed by YA role 184.YA altering other people's view of self 176.Family proud of YA involvement 177.Friends intrigued by YA role 146.Adult stakeholders showing their appreciation for the YA contribution 136.Feeling valued and validated by adult stakeholders 214.This specific YA group highly thought of by community and national stakeholders **Organisational factors** 81.YA as an income resource 54.Diversity within YA as a bonus **Motivated by addressing particular community issues** 50.Feeling motivated to address community issues as a result of YA experience 205.Perceived pervasive and long-term nature of community issues in borough 124.Knife crime in borough 202.Crime and feeling unsafe in the borough 203.Street harassment 198.Poverty in the borough 195.Rising house prices

28.Learning how to work in diverse groups 73.Developing responsibility 36. Developing diplomacy Developing skills for adulthood Developing understanding of corporate structures 194.Developing community understanding **YA aiding future career prospects** YA as a professional setting 173.Transferrability of YA skills to university 169.Transferability of skills to future workplaces 163.Enhancing CV and developing future employability 167.YA manager helping with job applications 57.YA as a steppingstone to a career in law **Developing relationships with others** 152.Valuing relationships built through YA 153. Developing friendships outside of normal social circle Forging connections across diversity 154. YA as a supportive peer network 188.Developing connections to authority figures in the community (bridging capital)	129. Gentrification of borough 130. Unequal distribution of community resources 211.Perceived neglect of some areas of the borough 131.Ideas to promote community development and inclusion 134.Raise awareness about and increase utilisation of available community resources 119.Lack of amenities for youth in borough 80.Lack of employment opportunities for youth in borough 133.Young people getting left behind in community development 118.Young community members feeling let down and disconnected from the council 121.YA giving youth voice on issues that matter to them

Appendix N

IPA Stage 4 – Emergent Themes Organised into Subordinate Themes for Megan's Transcript

A varied role	**Preventative approach**
77.Scope and variation of YA work surpassing initial expectations of role	175.YA providing more positive social outlets for youths
73.YA offering a variety of different things you can do	174.YA as an alternative source of income for crime involved youths
74.YA focusing on a variety of social problems	164.Receiving training to ensure YA member safety during street engagement work.
13.Raising awareness about the climate emergency	**Directly engaging with community members**
64.Tackling crime in the borough	166.Using non-threatening questions to develop rapport with target youth during street work
4.Gathering community views and analysing data gathered to inform future change efforts	**Organisational factors**
3.Supporting delivery of local events	104. Inclusion as a cornerstone of YA
5.Engaging with youths and supporting their community participation through Streetbase	75.Manager facilitating a variety of commissions and opportunities for YA members
17.Taking up the Deputy Youth Mayor position and participating at the London Youth Assembly (civic engagement)	123.YA as a supportive work setting
16.Raising community awareness on relevant topics	**Power situated within the YA role**
33.Educationing adults/authority figures about community issues	72.YA giving young people a voice
90.Engaging in peer education	76.YA opening up a range of opportunities for young people
Promoting change for individuals in the community	29.Questioning adults in a respectful manner
124.Supporting youths to set up their own businesses	**Difficulties arising during street work**
10.Facilitating young people to develop their interests and hobbies	118.Feeling apprehensive before engaging in street work
8.Giving young people a chance to fulfil their hopes for the future	152.Difficulty motivating self to go out in poor weather conditions
162.Developing youth interest in joining YA	145.Reluctance of some youths to engage with YA during street work
105.YA as an alternative path for youth in trouble	The emotional impacts of receiving negative responses from others
105.YA helping its youth members	144.Reading social cues to evaluate openness of youths to engagement
Affecting change at a systemic level	147.Staying positive and professional in the face of negative responses from others
20.Working collaboratively with youths from other boroughs to address community issues across London	151.Listening to gospel music as a coping strategy
Civic engagement, local governance, systemic working	**Organisational factors**
39.Questioning authority figures about community change efforts	

173.Effectively tackling crime in borough through Streetbase youth engagement programme 15.Raising awareness about the climate emergency to affect changes for future generations **A flexible and youth-led working model** 2. Choosing YA work based on own interests 32.Youths in position of power and influence **Negative self-concept pre-YA involvement** 174.Feeling marginalised and powerless before YA involvement Anxious and lacking confidence, inhibiting community participation and future life choices 129.Struggling to communicate **Journey into YA** 100.An ingrained inclination to help others and a history of involvement in peer support roles 138.Success in previous roles helping others 109.A long-term appreciation for diversity 60.A long term interest in affecting social change 51.Referred to YA by a teacher at school 41.Joining YIAG in an effort to affect community change **Impact of YA on current view of self** 170.A role model for others 88.YA involvement as helping self 160.YA participation helping own mental health 172.A more open and empathetic self as a result of YA involvement 157.An altered view of own community 47.A more insightful self **Conceptualising the future self** 180.Future self as successful 181.Future self as a solicitor or midwife 184.Hoping to remain working with YA in the long-term	168.Time and patience required for change to take place **Time** 153.Balancing YA work with other competing demands on time **Quality of the YA work** 111.Valuing the different opportunities offered by YA 115.YA as an opportunity to help others 52.Interview as a positive experience 119.Having positive experiences during Street Patrol 142.Positives outweighing the negatives in YA role **Within person factors** 85.Feeling good about changes in self and happy to be involved with YA 94.Appreciating the opportunities to develop her skills and realise her capabilities 93.Taking pleasure from helping others and making them happy (positive psychological benefits of helping others) 34.Feeling effective in role of helping others 97.YA cherished by self and a source of personal pride **Views and behaviours of others** 55.Receiving positive feedback from YA interview panel 32.Receiving positive feedback from adult authority figures 165.Family pride in YA work 132.Family history of helping others 169.Positive attitudes of friends towards YA work 171.Teachers viewing YA work positively **Organisational factors** 62.Financial reimbursement as an added bonus 168.Benefits accruing from YA wage **Power of the YA role** 22.YA offering young people a voice 26.Importance of young people having a voice

Building skills and competencies 96.YA pushing self out of comfort zone to develop skills and potential 155.YA developing self-efficacy, supporting self to realise own capabilities 81.Receiving training to develop capacity in YA role 84.Attributing YA with positive changes in self-confidence, communication skills, and community participation 78.Developing communication skills 79.Developing confidence 116.Developing resilience over time **YA aiding future career prospects** 87.Transferrence of YA skills to other areas of life (school) 63.YA as a job 157.YA developing confidence to pursue future career options **Developing relationships with others** 108.Making unexpected social connections through YA	43.YA as a mechanism for youths to affect community change 66.Not expecting to get a job like YA at such a young age **Motivated by addressing particular community issues** 178.Crime rate increasing in borough 56.Motivated to tackle street crime in borough 160.Problems of knife crime and gang activity 36.Lives being lost 42.Innocent people becoming victims of knife crime 49.Young males at increased risk 40.Feeling unsafe in the borough 50.Worryng about lack of safety in the community 68.Fearing for the safety of loved ones in the community 172.Crime as the only source of money for some young people 170. Lack of jobs for youths in borough and a lack of awareness of opportunities and help available 25.Youth marginalisation 140.Youth mental health difficulties 14.Climate change emergency

Appendix O

IPA Stage 4 – Emergent Themes Organised into Subordinate Themes for Emily's Transcript

A varied role 1.Involved with lots of different things 2.Youth Mayor's Team 46.Young Residents Group 3.Young Mental Health Ambassador 4.Offering the youth perspective at community meetings and consultations 5.Streetbase youth engagement programme 10.Supporting youths to set up their own businesses 44.Involvement with community events **Promoting change for individuals in the community** 61.YA role as helping other young people 9.Involvement in a youth engagement programme promoting youth community participation 47.Developing political participation among youths in the community through YA role 63.Raising community member awareness about opportunities available to them **Affecting change at a systemic level** 8.Contributing to the development of resources for youths through YA role **A flexible and youth-led working model** 113.Appreciating the flexibility offered by the YA role 152.YA work focusing on young people in the borough 12.Adopting a youth-led, non-directive approach **Journey into YA** 100.Viewing friends as bad influences	**Difficulties in youth-adult community collaborations** 22.Lack of trust in adult stakeholders and authority figures in the community 68.Disappointed with the support offered by a YA promoted programme in the community **Organisational factors** 41.Areas for improvement within the YA role 120.Lack of community understanding regarding the YA role 65.Sometimes feeling frustrated by challenges in the YA role 48.Feeling frustrated by lack of communication, hierarchy and feeling like an unequal partner in some YA team projects 106.Disliking miscommunication and perceived inequality when allocating YA work 147.Seeking more equal treatment within YA 115.Inconsistency in amount of work available from month to month 133.Lack of opportunities to achieve full potential in role 37.Feeling that own views are not always taken on board by adult stakeholders within YA **Limitations in the power of the YA role** 31.Disappointed that YA did not live up to initial expectations 32.YA role holding less power and influence than expected / 33.Limitations in the (scope of) power and influence of the YA role to affect change 35.Seeking more YA involvement in community decision-making 40.Youth members not fully fulfilling their potential to affect change within the YA role 39.Limitations in power and influence of YA manager role to affect change

23.A passion for social change, justice, and human rights instilled from childhood 12.Referred to YA through college 14.Feeling excited about the prospect of the YA role 16.Self as passionate about social change 28.Self as experiencing a lot of injustices and inequality **Impact of YA on current view of self** 82.YA has had a definite impact on self Perceiving self to be effective in role supporting the community 102.Altering personal view of the council as a result of YA involvement 129.A negative view and negative experiences with the council before YA involvement 79.Negative personal experiences with the police 57.Lived in areas with high crime rates 84.YA has developed own self-awareness 122.The social self 93.Learning to embrace opportunities 117.Developing knowledge and interest in community and youth work through YA involvement **Conceptualising the future self** 144.Planning to stay involved with YA until reaches the age limit 140.Long term commitment to community work and to supporting young people 138.Future self as happy and fulfilled 139.Future self as a successful businessperson **Building skills and competencies** 96.Developing team working skills 98.Developing interpersonal skills Managing conflicts 83.Developing community understanding	59.Having to accept challenges and limitations in role **Relationship difficulties** 73.Difficulty working with some other YA members 58.Perceives not always listened to by other YA members 74.Feeling disliked by some YA members 75.Reluctance to engage with some YA members 59.Talking to other YA members to address team working problems **Quality of the YA work** 145.YA as a good experience overall Liking the job and enjoying the work 103.Believes would not be in an enjoyable job if had not joined YA 113.Appreciating the flexibility offered by the YA role 70.Greatly enjoyed involvement with the fun day event for children in care 72.Valued talking with and listening to the experiences of children in care 71.Enjoying consultations in YA role 146.Valuing the opportunities offered through YA **Within person factors** 20.Intrinsically motivated to engage in social change and community development work 18.Motivated to become civically engaged and to help others 21.Wanting to create a better future for young people 25.Personal experiences of injustice and inequality motivating social action 64.Feeling good at times to be involved with YA 95.Placing great value on the friendships formed through YA 108.Enjoys working with people at YA **Views and behaviours of others** 119.Perceives self to be viewed more positively by others due to YA involvement

YA aiding future career prospects 13.YA as a job 67.Developing entrepreneurial skills through involvement with a programme promoted by YA 85.YA has developed ability to navigate a work environment **Developing relationships with others** 45.Meeting other young people through YA role 94.Developing good friends through YA 142.Developing contacts within the council (bridging capital) **Youth-led approach** 36.YA offering youth members opportunity to engage in some community decision-making **Preventative approach** 11.Receiving training in safeguarding and engaging with the public **Power situated within the YA role** 7.YA viewed as youth experts by local stakeholders 118.Feeling listened to by adult stakeholders in YA role 29.YA as a chance for youths to affect positive community change and to help others 62.Having access to more opportunities through YA role **Peer-to-peer support** 101.Receiving encouragement and support from friends at YA	110.Family proud of YA involvement 111.Friends looking up to YA role 143.Friends also interested in joining YA **Organisational factors** 19.Financial reimbursement as an added bonus 34.YA as a good organisation **Motivated by addressing particular community issues** 26.Inequality in society 150.Housing problem in borough 50.Homelessness 51.A lack of opportunities for young people and other community members 53. High crime rate in the borough 137.Young people in the youth justice system 54. Poor relationships between police and young people in the borough 81.Marginalisation and disempowerment of youth 76.Youths in community as disconnected from the council and politically disengaged 56.Seeking more opportunities for civic engagement in the community 77.Bad perception and problems with the council 128.A lack of communication between the community and the council and a need to develop community awareness of opportunities in the borough 148.Seeking to raise more community awareness about the council and what they do

Appendix P

IPA Stage 4 – Emergent Themes Organised into Subordinate Themes for Charlotte's Transcript

A varied role	**Youth-led approach**
2.YA role is varied	202.YA members speaking from their own youth experiences
5.Youth Mental Health Ambassadors	171.Using insider knowledge as youths in the community to target hotspot areas for youth engagement
6.Climate Emergency Change Project	175.Peer to peer engagement offering a connection different from other youth-serving professionals
7.Life Chances Taskforce	**Directly engaging with community members**
127.Offering peer to peer engagement through Streetbase	174.Adopting a relationship approach through Streetbase
1.Coordinating the Streetbase programme	174.The importance of showing compassion and genuine warmth in peer to peer engagement
152..Training community stakeholders in youth engagement	180.Adapting a more personal style of communicating
153.Delivering workshops to criminal justice professionals on how to engage with young people	181.Speaking on an equal footing to target youths in the community
142.Receiving training on topics such as violence against women and girls and then delivering workshops to students in schools	**Organisational factors**
124.Supporting delivery of local events	226.YA providing a structured process for challenging professionally respectfully to get more favourable outcomes for all involved
152.Presenting at the Youth Justice Board Convention in Birmingham	84.High retention rate in YA membership
144.Completing murals in the borough to raise awareness about social issues	188.Diverstiy within YA leading to better service provision
124.Gathering views from community members through survey administration	131.YA manager adopting a facilitative role in delivery of youth-led services
88.Providing the youth perspective at community stakeholder meetings	133.YA manager advocating for YA members to ensure the authentic youth voice is honoured by other agencies
194.Advocating for vulnerable youths in the community	57.YA ex-manager setting up meetings with councillors for members interested in addressing community issues
123.YA role and the nature of the work changing over time	Manager as supportive and accommodating
Promoting change for individuals in the community	**Power situated within the YA role**
197.YA giving vulnerable young people more of a chance	189.YA making a powerful impact in the community
170.Offering peer to peer engagement in the community	205.YA members as ideally positioned within the structure of YA to provide a voice for youths
172.Signposting youths to recreational and vocational opportunities based on their interests	156.Feeling at an advantage as a YA member compared other young people
173.Striving to build and maintain genuine relationships between	

target youth and YA members 182.Aiming to foster sense of community in target youth 183.Developing youths' connection to the council **Affecting change at a systemic level** 99.Supporting better communication between adult stakeholders and youths in the community through delivery of tailored training and workshops to local agencies 139.Participating in a campaign to create a cleaner, youth-friendly community environment 191. Adopting a multi-faceted, systemic approach towards reducing serious violence in the borough 192. YA members sitting on boards within the council, advocating for youths and influencing decisions impacting young people in the borough 198.YA impacting local police practice 199.Developing greater empathy and understanding in community stakeholders 206.Encouraging a more nuanced, systemic understanding of community problems **A flexible and youth-led working model** 3.Flexibility of YA role 83.Flexibility offered in the YA role when balancing YA work with other competing demands on time 4.Freedom to choose work based on own interests 134.YA manager as the only adult staff member 130.YA members allowed autonomy and creative freedom when developing training and workshops **Journey into YA** 50.A working-class background 19.Recruited to YA through school 23.Drawn to YA by the opportunity to talk	YA members recognised as youth experts by community stakeholders 216.Enjoying position of influence and feeling listened to and respected by community stakeholders 59.Gaining direct access to council officials and politicians to address community issues 93.Regular access to valuable opportunities through YA 147.Perceiving self as having extra autonomy and decision-making power as a coordinator within YA **Peer-to-peer support** 14.A focus on team working and building on each other's strengths 180.Giving praise and showing gratitude to fellow YA members 182.Building up others' self-esteem to achieve better outcomes 235.YA support network keeping self focused and level-headed **Difficulties in youth-adult community collaborations** 132.Youth voice can be compromised when collaborating with other agencies 212.The risk of token engagement and the personal toll of sharing one's truth with community stakeholders **Organisational factors** 86.Some dependency on funding from the YA national charity resulting in reduced work for members 88.YA positioning in relation to the council acting as a buffer when the national charity has funding shortages 125. Reliance on funding from outside agencies for some YA commissions 126. Voluntary groups in the borough offering similar support at local events reducing the need for YA involvement 128.Competing demands on YA time within the role restricting some types of working **Relationship difficulties**

25.Applying to YA despite peer pressure not to	239.Difficulty managing some relationships within YA
32.Feeling stressed and excited about the application	**Time**
18.Becoming the youngest member to join at the age of 12	17.Competing demands on time reducing availability of YA members
36.A very active YA member	90.Missing out on training for specific roles when balancing YA with other demands on time
22.A talker and a good communicator	92.Importance and keeping up-to-date with YA correspondence to avoid missing out on training and other opportunities
41.A debater	
208.A wilful, confident character	
30.Independent minded and resilient	
110.A mother	**Quality of the YA work**
183.A nurturer of others	243.Not experiencing many difficulties in role
176.A people's person	15.YA role as an overwhelmingly positive experience
241.Honest and outspoken	141. YA activities as fun and enjoyable
148.Egalitarian and democratic	121.A relaxed work setting
Impact of YA on current view of self	11.Enjoying the team working
219.Perceives YA as having the greatest impact on self	143.Particularly enjoying the Streetbase Coordinator role
228.YA shaping self and leading to long term benefits	67.Enjoying presenting on community action planning
58.Feeling empowered by YA experiences	**Within person factors**
60.Feeling privileged as a YA member	96.Intrinsic motivation developing once active in role
62.Realising own capabilities through YA experiences	46.Feeling inspired and amazed by YA facilitated experiences
237.More focused	200.Taking pride in the positive impact of YA on the community
220.More professional	244.Feeling successful and perceiving self as making an impact in YA role
240.A more confident and proud mum	102.Feeling empowered through YA experiences
106.Developing a reputation within the council through YA involvement	203.Valuing the opportunity to advocate for others
93. Happy and successful because of YA	76.Appreciating the self-development aspect of the YA role
Ageing out of YA as a threat to identity	**Views and behaviours of others**
95.Importance of YA involvement to sense of self and identity	33.Family supportive of YA application
94. Relieved that age limit was extended to 25	119.Sister and close friend also choosing to join YA
246.Wanting to raise the age limit further	35.Impressing the YA manager during initial interview
113.Apprehensive about the transition out of YA	71.Valuing recognition for achievements
163.Feeling stressed about entering the adult workforce without	

university qualifications 164.Feeling somewhat reassured about future career options with connections established through YA **Conceptualising the future self** 82.Longterm commitment to YA 251.Happy and confident about future career plan 247.Hoping to become a councillor in the future **Building skills and competencies** 8.Receiving various training as part of YA role 61.Developing confidence through YA involvement 63.Developing communication and public speaking skills through YA 13.Developing team working skills through YA role 66.Developing skills in community action planning 55.Becoming civically engaged through YA role 225.Learning how to argue well 69.Learning how to recognise tokenism and how to challenge it in a professional manner 221.Developing more patience and more understanding and empathy for others' experiences 234.Developing tolerance and learning to interact with people of all ages 224.Making less assumptions and pre-judgments about others 227.Learning skills in diplomacy 240.Become more aware of impact of own behaviour on others and adapting behaviour accordingly 81.YA as preparation for adult life **YA aiding future career prospects** 140.YA as a career 70.Transferrability of YA skills and training to other areas of life 53.Standing out from other applicants as a result of YA	185.YA members viewed as intelligent proactive members of the community, making a positive change 112.Receiving appreciation and respect within YA 101. Receiving extensive praise and positive feedback for training and public speaking skills as part of YA role 38.YA experience viewed as very valuable by adults in powerful positions 102.Feeling respected by adults in high power positions 109.Receiving praise and positive recognition for balancing motherhood with YA work 165.Adults expressing belief in potential of future self **Organisational factors** 27.Initially motivated by financial reimbursement 72.Flexibility of YA working hours as a major bonus 111.Flexibility of YA role compared to other workplaces 73.YA manager as highly supportive and accommodating of individual members' circumstances 75.YA manager as understanding and supportive of individual YA members' interests when allocating work **Power of the YA role** 150.Appreciating the trust and autonomy offered by the YA manager 98.Valuing the influence of the work 186.Perceiving YA as having a powerful impact on the local community 213.Enjoying positive relationships with community agencies and adult stakeholders **Motivated by addressing particular community issues** 56.Difficulty abiding with perceived injustices 187.Stigma and negative stereotypes against youths 184.YA reducing negative stereotypes and creating more positive attitudes towards youths through YA role 201.Youth mental health and its contribution to crime in the

experience 37.YA experience helping to secure a place at a top Sixth Form 42.Gaining work experience at prestigious law firms through YA experience 43.Attending networking events and establishing legal connections (linking capital) 54.Choosing a future career path as a councillor as a result of YA experience 248.YA developing confidence to follow future career path 166.Making contacts and being offered future work opportunities through YA role 39.Being granted so many opportunities as a result of YA 44.YA manager supporting members to pursue future career interests **Developing relationships with others** 230.Meeting the most amazing people through YA 116.YA as a supportive peer network 120.Developing strong and long-term relationships through YA 137.Enjoying a close relationship with the YA manager 213.Enjoying positive relationships with community agencies and adult stakeholders 59.Developing connections within the council through YA role (linking capital) 249.Making connections with other people in powerful positions	community 196.Poverty and social disadvantage in borough contributing to youth crime and serious violence in the borough 195.YA offering the youth perspective and starting a new conversation around serious violence in the borough 254. Homelessness and the stigma against homeless people 255. Gentrification in the borough Passionate about supporting young parents

Appendix Q

Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust Research Ethics Committee (TREC) Ethical Approval

The Tavistock and Portman NHS
NHS Foundation Trust

Quality Assurance & Enhancement
Directorate of Education & Training
Tavistock Centre
120 Belsize Lane
London
NW3 5BA

Tel: 020 8938 2699
https://tavistockandportman.nhs.uk/

Nicola Hoyne

By Email

4 July 2019

Dear Nicola,

Re: Trust Research Ethics Application

Title: Using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis to explore the experiences of young people taking up peer support roles in the community.

Thank you for submitting your updated Research Ethics documentation. I am pleased to inform you that subject to formal ratification by the Trust Research Ethics Committee your application has been approved. This means you can proceed with your research.

Please be advised that any changes to the project design including changes to methodology/data collection etc, must be referred to TREC as failure to do so, may result in a report of academic and/or research misconduct.

If you have any further questions or require any clarification do not hesitate to contact me.

I am copying this communication to your supervisor.

May I take this opportunity of wishing you every success with your research.

Yours sincerely,

Best regards,

Paru Jeram
Secretary to the Trust Research Degrees Subcommittee
T: 020 938 2699
E: academicquality@tavi-Port.nhs.uk

cc. Course Lead, Supervisor, Research Lead

Appendix R

British Psychological Society (BPS, 2018) Code of Ethics and Conduct

1. BPS Ethical Principle: Respect

"Statement of values: Psychologists value the dignity and worth of all persons, with sensitivity to the dynamics of perceived authority or influence over persons and peoples and with particular regard to people's rights" (p.5).

2. BPS Ethical Principle: Competence

"Statement of values: Psychologists value the continuing development and maintenance of high standards of competence in their professional work and the importance of working within the recognised limits of their knowledge, skill, training, education and experience" (p.6).

3. Ethical Principle: Responsibility

"Statement of values: Psychologists value their responsibilities to persons and peoples, to the general public, and to the profession and science of Psychology, including the avoidance of harm and the prevention of misuse or abuse of their contribution to society" (p.7).

4. Ethical principle: Integrity

"Statement of values: Psychologists value honesty, probity, accuracy, clarity and fairness in their interactions with all persons and peoples, and seek to promote integrity in all facets of their scientific and professional endeavours" (p.7).