



**Reflective Participatory Crime Prevention Education and
Solution Finding through World Café and Forum Theatre
with Young People and Young Adults**

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Four independent case-studies showcase World Caf  and Forum Theatre methodology. World Caf  events investigated 1) New Psychoactive Substances (NPS) awareness with young hostel users and college pupils (N = 22), and 2) race hate crime with school and college pupils (N = 57). Forum Theatre events explored 1) loan shark crime with college and university students (N = 46), and 2) domestic abuse crime with young hostel users and college and university students (N = 28). Anonymous survey data produced qualitative and descriptive statistical data.

Learning impacts from participatory crime prevention education and research events were evidenced. Participatory approaches were perceived positively, although, large group discussion-based methodologies may not suit all young people or all criminological topics.

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Safer Communities: Special Edition Theory and practice of co-production and co-creation in Youth Justice

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Originality: Participatory approaches of World Café and Forum Theatre are vehicles for 1) social learning and crime prevention with young people and young adults, 2) eliciting crime victimisation data and 3) generating personal solutions, alongside wider policy and practice improvement suggestions. Whilst World Café elicited greater lived experience accounts providing peer-level social learning, Forum Theatre provided crucial visual role modelling for communicating safeguarding messages.

KEYWORDS: participatory research, participatory education, youth crime prevention, world café, forum theatre, drugs, racism, loan sharks, domestic abuse.

Introduction:

Recent youth justice policy development in England and Wales includes working with young people in participatory ways to prevent and reduce youth offending (Smithson and Jones, 2021; Day, 2022). Participatory practice is about listening to and working with young people to bring about change (Aldridge, 2016). The emphasis becomes about creating, doing interventions, and finding solutions with young people, rather than to them (Haines and Case, 2015), which can be applied to youth justice related research (Smithson and Jones, 2021). This paper outlines how participatory practice

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3 regarding world café and forum theatre can be utilised in crime prevention education
4 sessions, resulting in solution finding for individual young people and for wider policy
5 and practice. Four independent case-study examples are reflected upon using Gibb's
6 (1988) model. An applied social learning lens provides further exploration for the
7 propensity for world café and forum theatre to generate crime prevention learning
8 and research data collection.
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11 **Crime Prevention, Education and Social Learning:**

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13 British young people are more likely to engage in offending behaviour and become
14 crime victims compared to adults (Muncie, 2009) due to multiple reasons (e.g., mental
15 health, homelessness, and family circumstances) as outlined by the Youth Justice
16 Board England and Wales (2021;6). Young people tend to have limited knowledge and
17 understanding on relevant legislation and criminal justice processes, so the police and
18 Home Office advocate for more awareness raising (Bevan, 2016; 6). Engagement in
19 learning activities provides some protection from crime involvement (Machin et al,
20 2011). Schoolteachers are social control agents, influencing the values and behaviours
21 of children (Reay, 2017). The Department for Education (2022) promote teacher's
22 communicating behaviour curriculum through reinforcement of positive behaviour and
23 sanctions for misbehaviour. Other professionals, including police crime prevention
24 leads (Hobson et al, 2018) and mentors (Newburn et al, 2005) positively influence
25 behaviour. Extra curriculum participation in youth movements have longstanding pro-
26 social modelling significance (Muncie, 2009), as has sport engagement (Girginov,
27 2009), the arts (Howard, 2022) and other activities. Activities can be delivered in
28 participatory ways where participants can shape the programme (refer to Page *et al*,
29 2022; Smithson and Jones, 2021).
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36 School education approaches have implications for learning engagement and pupil
37 behaviour improvement (Ross *et al*, 2010). The expert passing on knowledge to
38 passive recipients is perceived less effective (Biggs and Tang, 2011). Views towards
39 experts can diminish as children move into secondary education, as with police officers
40 delivering drugs education (O'Connor, 2010). Increasing learner engagement
41 facilitates deeper learning (Biggs and Tang, 2011) to enable change (Kolb, 1984). A
42 learning '*with*' approach is more effective (Friere, 1970), allowing a '*community of*
43 '*practice*' to form (Wenger, 1999). Pedagogical considerations include devolving power
44 for shared learning to be achieved (Friere, 1970), by offering interaction and decision-
45 making opportunity to children, alongside engagement confidence and competence
46 building (Kirby *et al*, 2003). Such participatory approaches help facilitate active
47 learning, as well as research (Page *et al*, 2021). Kapoor and Jordan (2009; 1) further
48 highlight the synergy between "*research, knowledge, education and social action*".
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54 Late 18th Century criminology and psychology 'learning theories' validate behaviour
55 being learnt based on environmental stimuli and reinforcement (Hollins, 2017;42).
56 Social learning theories of crime built on this research (ibid; 44), with emphasis on
57 social relationships and associated impacts on learning and change from the 1920's
58 onwards (Jenson, 2017; 115). Sutherland (1947) articulated a learning process from
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3 significant others, including family, friends, and educators, swaying individuals that
4 law breaking is favourable. Akers (1973) concurred and acknowledged punishment
5 impacts learning towards crime, but views can change over the life-course (In Jenson,
6 2017; 116-117). Matza (1976) provided evidence that young people drift into crime
7 through a process of learning values towards deviance and learning the skillset to
8 commit crime and then stop offending. Social learning from role models can occur
9 early in childhood and copying behaviour embellishes on what is role modelled
10 (Bandura, 1977). Becker's (1963) labelling theory also has elements of learning
11 regarding how significant role models can be instrumental in achieving labelling
12 impacts perpetuating deviance. However, such theories are critiqued for a lack of
13 empirical evidence concerning identification and testing of learning and reinforcement
14 mechanisms that purportedly leads to crime (Proctor and Niemeyer, 2020).
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20 Despite scientific testability criticisms, learning, social learning, and labelling theories
21 have significantly shaped British policy and practice, for example, the emphasis on
22 crime prevention education with young people deemed at risk (Case, 2006). Today's
23 youth justice approach emphasises the importance of 'child first' to 'de-stigmatise'
24 young offenders and prevent crime through education and support (Youth Justice
25 Board for England and Wales, 2021), which is reflective of these key crime theories.
26 Furthermore, British criminal justice desistance approaches typically include 'cognitive
27 behavioural interventions' (Davey *et al*, 2015;4-5) aiming to alter thinking towards
28 prosocial behaviour. Day (2022) asserts that under the new youth justice '*child first*'
29 approach in England and Wales, there is a move to a strengths model with co-
30 production of tailored interventions, rather than risk and behaviour management.
31 Within participatory and co-produced approaches, the emphasis is on shared learning
32 informing action and change (Smithson and Jones, 2021), rather than a top-down
33 approach.
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38 **Participatory Contextualisation:**

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40 Participation involves everyone contributing for developmental purposes (Boyden and
41 Ennew, 1997; Morrow, 1999). As such, participatory research with children prioritises
42 the voice of the child and provides a child-orientated approach to improve policy and
43 practice (Collins *et al*, 2016). Children having voice is validated by international
44 children's rights legislation (Muncie, 2009; Brown, 2020; Creaney and Case, 2021).
45 Children's ages (Smith, 2002) and ability (Aldridge, 2016) have implications for
46 participation levels but have been found to be more accessible for learning and
47 physically disabled children (Aldridge, 2016). Learning disability is more prevalent in
48 incarcerated populations and participatory practice can benefit this cohort (Page *et al*,
49 2022). Participatory research is a democratic process, facilitating knowledge and vision
50 production that helps engage the marginalised (Kapoor and Jordan, 2009), as well as
51 with professional and community stakeholders (Bovaird, 2007; Boyle and Harris, 2009;
52 Page *et al*, 2021). Despite efforts to engage all, participatory practice does not always
53 result in equal contributions (Harman, Cappellini and Campos, 2020).
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59 *Levels of Engagement:*

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3 Brown's (2021;3) participatory research continuum depicts consultative involvement
4 through to full collaboration, reflecting Hart's (1992) involvement ladder for children
5 and young people. Some traditional research practices incorporate elements of
6 consultation, such as pilot study feedback shaping practice, or power sharing through
7 unstructured interviewing (Page, 2023). However, Hart (1992) advocates that practice
8 moves beyond tokenistic measures. Participatory research is clearly identifiable when
9 participants are "*working as 'co-researchers' alongside academic or other 'professional*
10 *researchers'... entailing diverse groups of people creating knowledge together.*"
11 (Banks *et al*; 2019; 23), which can be achieved with young people (Aldridge, 2016).
12 Co-creation reduces academic privilege through power sharing (Goldstraw *et al*,
13 2021).
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18 Factors limit fully collaborative practice (Page, 2023). For example, funding and short
19 timeframes can increase participants feeling '*done to*', rather than '*with*' (Kara, 2018;
20 59). Research budgets may not cover payment to co-researchers (Page, 2023) and
21 with participatory practice being time consuming for the academic researcher (Banks
22 *et al*, 2019;4) and for co-researchers, remuneration is important (Page, 2023).
23 Commissioner expectations may include the academic researcher leading due to
24 perceived greater influence (Aldridge, 2016; Page *et al*, 2021). Furthermore,
25 collaborative risks need managing to safeguard young people (Aldridge, 2016). For
26 example, gatekeepers might block participant access or ethic approval (Page, 2023),
27 so including them in research design could increase buy in and reach (Ahern, 2014;
28 Kara, 2018;105), but may create barriers for young people expressing their
29 experiences (Page, 2023). All these factors have implications for the levels of
30 engagement that can be achieved in research.
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36 *Activism and Change Goals:*

37 Participatory research intentionally includes a change agenda (Aldridge, 2016) co-led
38 with lived and learned experience experts. Co-created knowledge informs activism,
39 requiring a diverse findings dissemination plan to build change traction (Durose *et al*,
40 2011). Collaborative discussions with young people on how best to present and
41 disseminate findings is advocated (Aldridge, 2016; Smithson and Jones, 2021). The
42 best interests of the child need to be considered in dissemination practices (Page,
43 2023), particularly if co-researchers are young perpetrators of victims of crime and
44 are named co-researchers on publications. There needs to be some mindfulness of
45 '*need for anonymity to protect children from life-long stigma and labelling*' under
46 international rights of the child (Muncie, 2009;360).
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51 *Topic Suitability for Participatory Practice:*

52 Projects reducing crime and improving health and well-being are suitable for
53 participatory research (Stalker *et al*, 2020), but topics can be too sensitive (Page,
54 2023). Ethics regarding sensitive questions, managing disclosure and reducing harm
55 to participants needs consideration (ibid). Another ethical factor is working within the
56 co-researcher competency parameters (ibid). Academic researchers present for in-situ
57 research coaching support and research team debriefs can assist with this (Page,
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2020; Page *et al*, 2022), as well as suitable referral pathways in place for participants (Page and Temple-Malt, 2018; Page, 2020). There are also sensitivity considerations in the data collection methodology, for example, participants sharing personal experiences with each another in large groups can hinder disclosure, or emotionally impact those present, including co-researchers (Page, 2023).

Methodology:

This paper draws on four independent case-studies from World Café and Forum Theatre crime prevention education and research events. World Café events investigated 1) New Psychoactive Substances (NPS) awareness with young hostel users and college pupils (N = 22), and 2) race hate crime with school and college pupils (N = 57). Forum Theatre events explored 1) loan shark crime with college and university students (N = 46), and 2) domestic abuse crime with young hostel users and college and university students (N = 28). Anonymous survey data at all events produced qualitative and descriptive statistical data. The research studies highlighted in the case-studies were granted Staffordshire University ethical approval and the British Society of Criminology (2015) ethical guidance of voluntary participation, informed consent, right to not answer a question, sensitive questioning and debrief were employed. The propensity for World Café and Forum Theatre being used as crime prevention education and research tools with young people and young adults was analysed using a social learning theory lens and Gibb's (1988) reflective model.

World Café Participatory Methodology:

Brown and Issacs (2005) developed the participatory qualitative research methodology of world café. It can be facilitated with smaller participant numbers of 8 to 12 people (Page and Temple-Malt, 2018; Page *et al*, 2022), through to class size cohorts (Page, 2020) in a café-style environment. World café's typically start with informed consent (including parental/guardian consent if applicable) and outlining participant rights (Page, 2023). A short presentation focused on crime prevention and awareness raising (Page and Temple-Malt, 2018) or event or provisional research findings reflections (Page, 2021; Page *et al*, 2022) stimulates conversations. Several research questions are posed one-at-a-time (Page *et al*, 2022) and simultaneous group conversations acquire insights, identify issues and related solutions (Page and Temple-Malt, 2018). The room can be set up with paper-tablecloths on tables for data capture (ibid), or flip chart paper and post-it notes (Page, 2023). Refreshments are typically available on tables (Page and Temple-Malt, 2018), although dedicated refreshment breaks work (Page *et al*, 2022), along with participants bringing their own refreshments to online events (Page, 2021). World Café sessions can take several hours, so participant hydration is important (Page, 2023). At set points, participants are asked to move (rotate) to different discussion groups to listen and add contributions (Brown and Issacs, 2005). A delegated, or self-selecting person, welcomes newcomers to the group, recaps the conversation and encourages newcomer contributions (Page, 2023). After discussions reach saturation, or time expires, someone shares the main themes from their group to the wider cohort, which

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3 initiates the beginnings of participatory themed analysis (ibid). At the end of the
4 session there is a summary and debrief (Page, 2020).
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6 *World Café Adaptions:*

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8 Originally, world café delegates self-select group discussion facilitators (Brown and
9 Issacs, 2005) to enable democracy and power sharing. However, adapting the model
10 with pre-selected table-hosts to enable adequate training still facilitates a participatory
11 ethos and can benefit data capture quality (Page, 2023). Peer researchers may need
12 support during, or immediately after a world café (ibid). A further consideration is how
13 to collect demographic data at a world café (ibid). This could be achieved through an
14 end of event survey that also captures anything participants did not want to say in a
15 group context (Page and Temple-Malt, 2018) or demographic details could be
16 gathered at the event booking, or arrival stage (Page, 2023).
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21 **World Café Case-Study: New Psychoactive Substances (NPS) Drug** 22 **Awareness World Café**

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24 *Description:* All researchers were adults in or delivering education. Some had
25 historically relevant lived and learned experience. The team held regular meetings
26 with the local authority Public Health drug service commissioner for research co-
27 design. This case study focuses on one world café at a youth provision homeless hostel
28 (N = 8) and one with college pupils on a university campus (N = 14). Participants
29 were purposively targeted because NPS drug use is more prevalent with these groups
30 (Blackman and Bradley, 2017). An NPS drug crime prevention and awareness raising
31 presentation stimulated discussions. NPS drugs were being made illegal through a
32 blanket ban which young people did not know about (Page and Temple-Malt, 2018),
33 alongside limited health impact knowledge. Young hostel users held mostly negative
34 views about NPS drugs based on observed detrimental impacts upon friends. Whereas
35 college pupils shared little direct experiences and were somewhat judgemental
36 towards NPS drug users by referring to them as "chavs". Few participants knew about
37 support services available and young hostel users wanted a drug support service
38 onsite. Relevant support service information was contained in the debrief.
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44 *Feelings:* The principal investigator provided world café team training and overarching
45 event facilitation because others had less knowledge about this approach. For team
46 members with no direct lived and learned experience of homeless hostel settings,
47 culture shock was apparent and ongoing insight sharing across the team helped to
48 reduce discomfort for those affected. Young hostel users were more vulnerable and
49 empathetic in what they shared at the event due to social relations with NPS users.
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52 *Evaluation:* The participatory model felt more consultation based (Hart, 1992) because
53 researcher lived and learned experience was less recent. Younger hostel users needed
54 breaks away from group discussions. This contrasted to college pupils who remained
55 seated unless rotating to other discussion groups. Shared insights were more apparent
56 with young hostel users, irrespective of ad-hoc breaks away from the room. Whereas
57 top-down knowledge dissemination was more apparent for college pupils.
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Analysis: Shared power through informed joint decision-making within the research team increased as researchers gained relevant experiential knowledge. As such, power sharing levels may increase to a more collaborative approach during the research life cycle, meaning the position of a research project on the continuum of participatory practice described by Brown (2021) and Hart (1992) is not static. Team training, insight sharing and debrief can assist in sharing power and expertise. Whilst initial power was situated in the academic title of the principal investigator being more senior and their enhanced knowledge of the methodology, experiential knowledge of a fellow researcher with homeless people helped to distribute this power with the drawing of the strength of team members, rather than one individual. In analysis of the world café events, the differences in self-disclosure may be 1) reflective of the local drug market 2) due to hostel and education provider staff being present and 3) there being 'no drugs' policies within these organisations. Younger hostel users had empathic responses to NPS using friends and related emotions may explain the need for breaks in the session. College pupils may not have felt comfortable sharing personal experiences having heard judgemental responses from peers. Becker's (1963) labelling theory demonstrated that drug users did not disclose as much with non-users.

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Conclusion: Learning occurred at events from the presentation and shared dialogue. Participants having lived and learned experience led to viable solutions taken forward by stakeholders regarding a drugs worker becoming stationed onsite at hostels. Final findings and recommendations were disseminated through written report and a presentation at the British Society of Criminology conference with an associated publication (Page and Temple-Malt, 2018). A media article and YouTube clip were produced for a public audience. These world café sessions demonstrated propensity for legislative awareness raising and harm reduction information dissemination. Gatekeeper presence may restrict self-disclosure at events in relation to illegal activity reinforced by organisational policy. As such, social relation and control agents views towards crime could be influential (Sutherland, 1947; Becker, 1963; Matza, 1979) on the methodology success.

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Action Plan: This project created realisation of the importance of team training and shared learning to redistribute power among researchers throughout the life cycle of the project. Directly including young people with lived NPS drugs and homelessness in steering group meetings to co-design and deliver the project would have strengthened the participatory approach and reduced culture shock for researchers. Allowing for breaks away from discussions could be planned into future events, particularly when working with vulnerable groups where emotional connection to the data might be heightened. A further consideration is about not including gatekeepers at world cafés when researching on topics relating to illegal activity. Whilst staff provided an additional child protection safeguard, they may have created a barrier to honest sharing of personal NPS drugs usage.

59 **World Café Case-Study on Race Hate Crime:**

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3 *Description:* Local authority requested research aimed to address a prevalence
4 knowledge gap to inform action plans, but with no associated budget (Page, 2023).
5 This opportunity coincided with second year undergraduate criminology students
6 completing an assessed community research project. The unpaid co-researchers
7 included those with recent college education experience, lived experience of racism,
8 lived experience of parenting young people, and lived experience of working with
9 young people in community and youth justice settings. The ethical application was
10 coproduced, with additional methodology shaping following a pilot event led by the
11 co-researchers. Wider stakeholder partnership meetings provided insights and a
12 vehicle for findings dissemination, but co-researchers could not attend due to lecture
13 clashes (Page, 2023).
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18 World cafés were conducted on educational premises (schools and a university
19 campus) with 57 high school and college pupils (Page, 2020), when race-hate violence
20 had increased following the referendum (Burnett, 2017) and pupils were raising
21 associated concerns with teachers (Tomlinson, 2019). Upon written consent, a short
22 presentation clarified what constitutes race hate crime and related extremism (refer
23 to Croall, 2011; 214, 219 and HM Gov, 2015; 9) and local examples provided by an
24 agency stimulated ice-breaker discussions. Research questions were responded to via
25 group discussions facilitated by co-researchers and data was captured on table-
26 clothes. Participants highlighted need for better education in schools on what
27 constitutes racism and irrespective of race, reported lived and observational
28 experiences of racial abuse at a personal and interschool level, providing new insights
29 for the field (Page, 2020). Findings were disseminated through academic publication,
30 an online media article, a YouTube clip and radio interviews. In collaboration with
31 Mosaic Films, an educational film resource for BBC Teach on racism experiences were
32 developed to support national teaching and learning on race hate crime (Page, 2023).
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38 *Feelings:* Pupils welcomed open discussion but were seemingly uneasy when pupils
39 rotated and joined peers outside of immediate friendship circles, leading to pupils
40 speaking less. There was evidence of individual cognition changes occurring from
41 pupils being exposed to both the presentation content and peers sharing experiences,
42 which stimulated both compassion and discomfort. For example, one pupil commented
43 on not knowing that calling someone a 'gypsy' was racist prior to the world café (Page,
44 2020) and felt perturbed due to previous use of this term. The co-researchers
45 discussed their own emotional reactions to the data after sessions.
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49 *Evaluation:* Feeling safe with peers and staff seemed necessary to facilitate disclosure
50 and shared learning. A particular teacher perceived as racially prejudice being present
51 in one session led to pupils whispering about their experiences (ibid). Pupils liked world
52 café and felt it could be used for wider awareness raising and school education (ibid).
53 Having open dialogue about sensitive issues generated compassion and greater
54 understanding and self-awareness for those involved.
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58 *Analysis:* Social learning occurs more when young people feel safe with the peers or
59 adults present.
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3 *Conclusion:* World Café with school and college pupils worked as a data collection and
4 pedagogy tool. Shared learning through data collection was rich; however, social
5 relations (Garner and Sercomb, 2009) created a communication barrier. Media related
6 findings dissemination resulted a tool developed for change that reflected the pupils'
7 aspirations.
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10 *Action Plan:* In future, a less directive approach to rotations where young people
11 determine moves to different tables could reduce social relation barriers to discussion
12 engagement in world cafe. As such, training school and college pupils with lived and
13 learned experience as co-researchers could have enhanced participatory practice
14 (Page, 2023). This would be viable with adequate emotional support for young
15 researchers due to topic sensitivities and trauma that young people have evidently
16 been through. If resources transpired, a follow-up study with discussions relating to
17 the films, using world café methodology, would be interesting to ascertain further
18 change recommendations.
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23 **Forum Theatre Participatory Research Methodology:**

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25 Drama based participatory practices are established in prison settings with positive
26 well-being impacts for those involved (Page *et al*, 2022). Hughes and Ruding (2009)
27 highlight applied theatre usage in the community with young people at risk of
28 offending and young offenders in prison to help develop personal, cognitive and social
29 skills. Forum Theatre is an applied theatre and participatory method for exploring real
30 life scenarios through dramatic presentation and audience interactions that assist in
31 changing scenario outcomes for the better. It was developed by Boal in 1985 to allow
32 for a facilitated discussion informed production, whereby audience members interject
33 and reshape scenes after an initial performance (Boal, 2008). As such, Boal (1992)
34 articulated allowing the audience to explore their own social and political oppression
35 and rehearse '*social change*' (In Connolly and Prendergast, 2009;69). Audience
36 dialogue provides opportunity for research data to be collected on knowledge,
37 understanding, and lived experience levels. This could be achieved through consensual
38 audio recording or note taking of the discussions between the audience and
39 facilitator(s) for analysis purposes. Boal and others have written reflective and
40 observational notes from his practice (ibid). Kelly *et al* (2015) highlight challenges to
41 capturing drama-based crime prevention evaluative data with young people and
42 advocate for longer-term change capture and participatory evaluation solutions.
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49 **Forum Theatre Case Studies:**

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51 The following forum theatre case-studies were based on performances to smaller
52 through to larger cohort sizes (approx. 15 to 100 delegates), that lasted approximately
53 one and half hours, with half of the time devoted to performance and the other half
54 to discussion. The discussion time included reworked scenes, a short concluding
55 performance with signposting of support services and the dissemination of a non-
56 compulsory and anonymous short evaluation survey. Dramatic and creative
57 performances can be co-developed and delivered with those with lived and learned
58 experience (Page *et al*, 2022), however, the case-studies were delivered by
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3 professional's associated to New Vic Theatre Borderlines. Performance content was
4 based on research findings at local and national level, along with ¹stakeholder
5 contributions from meetings, reports, and email exchanges. Discussion facilitation was
6 provided by Borderlines theatre staff. The performance and discussions allowed for
7 Fleming's model of visual, auditory, reading/writing and kinaesthetic learning to be
8 accommodated (refer to Fleming and Baume, 2006).
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11 **Forum Theatre Case-Study on Loan Shark Crime:**

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13 *Description:* Loan shark crime is captured by Shakespeare and other English Literature
14 authors (Lisle, 1912). It is illegal and can involve organised crime groups using
15 deception tactics and violence (Wang and Wang, 2021). Perpetrators include
16 seemingly trustworthy professionals preying on the vulnerable (Dyer, 2017), including
17 those who gamble (Soudijn and Zhang, 2013; Page, 2021). Loan shark crime impacts
18 a range of people, including students (Wang and Wang, 2021). There have been calls
19 for improvements to British legislation for better public protection from loan shark
20 crime because of high interest loans (Aldohni, 2013; 2017). Violence experienced to
21 victims has led to Birmingham accident and emergency service staff to be trained to
22 spot loan sharking signs (Nursing Standard, 2012).
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27 On 4th November 2021, 'I Just Need Cash' ²was presented via forum theatre to 181
28 college and university students over three events at Staffordshire University. It
29 followed the stories of three characters (including a student using a loan shark to
30 purchase a laptop resulting in violent threats – far left in figure 1). Two facilitators
31 engaged participants in discussion and shared loan shark crime, legislation, and
32 support service information. Support agencies and academics contributed facts and
33 further information. Several scenes were re-configured from audience discussions. To
34 close, the performers showed the endings of their stories, including positive outcomes
35 from crime reporting and gaining support.
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40 Figure 1: picture of the 'I Just Need Cash' perform
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51 ¹ Thank you to Thomas Wragg and Ashleigh Shone from Staffordshire University for your Forum Theatre
52 administrative support and to academic colleagues (namely John Wheeler, Jayne Sawyers, Julie Tipping, Martin
53 Coates, Paul Christie, Lauren Metcalfe, Anna Garland, Duncan Parker, Louis Martin and Martin Brown) for your
54 forum theatre promotion/contributions.

55 ² I Just Need Cash was organised by Borderlines New Vic Theatre team members: Susan Moffat (director),
56 Rachel Reddihough (Project Manager), Aida Haughton MBE (Communities and Partnership Engagement
57 Manager), Brendan Davies (Community Practitioner) and Adhia Mahmood (Administrator). Professional actors
58 included: Melanie Osborne, Perry Moore and Vaneeka Dadhria. Photography by Andrew Billington
59 @BillingtonPhotos
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A voluntary participation evaluation survey containing signposting to services was distributed, resulting in a 25% return rate. Findings indicated low prior knowledge about loan sharking, with 2 out of 46 participants having awareness from work experience and their studies and 6 participants having knowledge through media sources. Lived experience was reported by 3 participants, inclusive of having texts and emails from a loan shark and of a close family member falling victim.

Feelings: Surveyed young people and young adults indicated the learning event was 'brilliant' and the delivery was 'engaging' and 'interesting', depicting positive feelings about the event. A couple of people stated it was not their preferred learning style, which may have created discomfort.

Evaluation: The approach worked well for loan shark crime awareness dissemination. Key learning identified included 1) the basics of what a loan shark is and how they operate (22%), 2) the legal status (17%), 4) associated prison sentence lengths (13%) and 4) where to get help from (31%). As a result of attending participants felt they could:

- Identify loan sharking
- Stay safe
- Speak out

- Signpost others for support
- Use the forum theatre technique

Mostly, delegates felt it was “...a more interesting way to learn and get information” than traditional teaching delivery and they perceived positively its research methodology propensity.

Analysis: Social learning occurred through role modelling via re-shaped scenes and information dissemination evidenced by participants saying they could now ‘stay safe’ and ‘speak out’. The lived experience captured via survey was not disclosed in group discussions and did not inform re-shaped scenes. Disclosure may have been hindered by audience size.

Conclusion: Crime prevention and awareness raising learning was evident. The delivery method was ‘interactive’ and ‘allowed knowledge to be taken in...’. Whilst a couple of participants highlighted it was not their preferred learning method, others stated it was ‘more engaging than a presentation’ and ‘made it more realistic’.

Action Plan: Facilitated small group discussion could provide more people opportunity to comfortably share reactions and experiences, which could better inform scene reconfiguration and shared learning.

Forum Theatre Case-Study on Domestic Abuse:

Description: The ‘LOVE HURTS?’ production (depicted in figure 2) was based on local research by Gadd and colleagues entitled ‘From Boys to Men’, which is surmised by Fox *et al* (2013). Extensive survey data with 13-and-14-year-olds school pupils highlighted that 45% were domestic abuse victims and 25% acknowledged perpetrating abuse (ibid). Crime prevention education sessions demonstrated reductions in acceptability of domestic abuse and increased understanding regarding reporting and support mechanism (Fox *et al*, 2014). In five schools, crime prevention education sessions co-occurred alongside pupils (aged 11-19 years) watching the ‘LOVE HURTS’ production in 2016, leading to increased cautiousness about entering romantic relationships (McElwee and Fox, 2020). The performance was regarded as an engaging tool for conveying messages relating to domestic abuse, however, a wider diversity of interpersonal relationships could have been depicted in the show (ibid).

On 23rd March 2022, ‘LOVE HURTS?’³ was delivered three times as a stand-alone crime prevention forum theatre to 43 audience participants from a university and a local youth provision hostel provider. Whilst hostel staff and academics attended, there were no pre-arranged partner agencies sharing insights. The storyline followed a school-aged girl entering a romantic relationship which turned abusive. Several academics provided ad-hoc acting support. For example, a policing pracademic demonstrated police interviewing with the storyline abuser, giving insight into realistic

³ LOVE HURTS? was organised by Borderlines New Vic Theatre team members (see footnote 2) and Professional actors included: Shannon Whetnall, Harrison Aldridge and Levi Payne. Photography by Aida Haughton MBE.

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3 policing enquiry. The event ended with signposting to support services and
4 opportunity to voluntarily complete an evaluation survey.
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6 Figure 2: pictures of LOVE HURTS performers in action:
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28 *Feelings:* The performance elicited audience emotion, including surprise over how
29 quickly abusive behaviours transpire in relationships. Discussions also elicited surprise
30 regarding legalities.
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33 *Evaluation:* There was a 65% evaluation audience survey return rate. Findings
34 indicated some prior knowledge of relationship "red flags". Others were less aware of
35 the 1) extent of domestic abuse in society 2) younger age groups impacted 3) speed
36 of relationship progression to abusive and 4) coercive control signs and legislation.
37 One participant stated learning about ""REVENGE PORN" law – I didn't know about it"
38 and another learnt "about rape" and how legislation regarded it as child abuse when
39 the girl is under consensual age. Others identified learning where to go for support
40 and how to help educate and support others. For some, the university syllabus had
41 covered domestic violence, but the forum theatre advanced insights deemed useful
42 for their assessments. Policing students identified potential benefits to future policing
43 work, inclusive of "how I would interact with victims". All 28 responders viewed the
44 event and performers positively. Participants stated forum theatre was "powerful" and
45 "very effective" in gaining insights from others and "very informative". As such, forum
46 theatre was regarded as "a good research method" that is "fun". The topic was a
47 sensitive one, as such, "fun" could be interpreted as engaging. Personal victimisation
48 stories were not disclosed in the discussions, or survey.
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54 *Analysis:* Forum theatre was perceived 'a great conversation starter', however,
55 younger hostel audience members mostly shared when directly asked a question,
56 which may be reflective of vulnerability levels.
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3 *Conclusion:* The approach was a good learning tool for eliciting discussion on legalities
4 in relation to rape, consent, child abuse and coercive control. Replaying the scenes
5 role modelled ways to address issues. Given that statistics underpinning the play
6 indicate likelihood of victims and perpetrators being present at the event, forum
7 theatre was less effective for people sharing personal experiences.
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10 *Action Plan:* Having support services present to contribute to discussions and provide
11 immediate support to anyone affected by domestic abuse would have benefited the
12 session. Smaller discussion groups with immediate peers could have provided less
13 vulnerability with shared learning.
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16 **Discussion and Conclusion:**

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18 Crime prevention education is needed for young people and young adults to better
19 understand crimes, associated harms, legislation and support available. The case-
20 study examples evidenced mostly low legislative awareness on topics directly affecting
21 young people as per findings from Bevan (2016; 6). Some knowledge is seemingly
22 gained through the media, higher education, employment, and direct lived experience.
23 Crime and legislation impacting young people were not sufficiently covered in school
24 curriculum and associated media reporting is not reaching widescale groups of young
25 people and young adults. When crime prevention education is delivered in
26 participatory ways learning can assist young people and young adults in spotting '*red*
27 *flags*' to avoid victimisation and supporting others to do likewise, as well as knowing
28 how to report incidents and get support.
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33 Participatory methods demonstrated effectiveness in personal learning and change.
34 Wider recommendations for policy and practice change were more evident in world
35 café events, but this information arose from targeted questions not covered in forum
36 theatre events. Whilst there are some limitations with comparing four individual case-
37 studies due to variances in project aims and objectives, the participant demographics
38 and the type of crime being discussed, some common themes emerge from reflections
39 on practice using the Gibbs (1992) reflective model. Discussion is a common feature
40 to both world café and forum theatre and in all case-studies discussion stimulus was
41 visual combined with verbal information presentation that engaged visual, auditory,
42 and kinaesthetic learners (refer to Fleming and Baume, 2006). Dramatical presentation
43 of information was perceived as an effective communication tool and conversation
44 starter, better than more traditional teaching presentations. Actors and other
45 professionals role modelled how to have important lifesaving and safeguarding
46 conversations. As such, social learning was apparent and effective in enhancing crime
47 prevention understanding. Young people also indicated that world café style crime
48 prevention education is positive for learning exchange.
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55 World café data was richer than forum theatre with more victimisation lived experience
56 information being captured. Small group discussions allowed for greater peer learning
57 and disclosure. Whereas larger group gatherings generated more legislative debate.
58 In both world café and forum theatre learning occurred through information
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3 presentation and peer conversations. Understanding from those with lived and learned
4 experience enhanced empathic session content.
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6 Our findings indicate that social relations seemingly have implications for whether
7 young people contribute information, as does age, vulnerability and having the sense
8 of safety and not being judged. Having appropriate adults present may conflict with
9 data density pertaining to lived experience of illegal activity. When conducting forum
10 theatre as a research and education tool, using smaller group discussions modelled by
11 world café may achieve richer data. In world café consulting with young people about
12 rotation intentions suitability, rather than being directive might reduce social relation
13 barriers to discussions. Maximising participation of young people in projects is likely
14 to enhance project and research team outcomes. Sharing insights with others with
15 less direct lived and learned experience helps there to be more parity on a participatory
16 research team. Reflections on practice indicate that identifying a static position on the
17 participatory continuum may not be possible because collaboration and shared power
18 can increase as people grow in their learned experiences of designing and delivering
19 participatory education and research.
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25 The case-studies evidenced propensity for participatory methods of world café and
26 forum theatre to be used for crime prevention education and research with young
27 people and young adults. Both methods demonstrate that social learning can take
28 place and solutions to issues can be established. Creating space for young people and
29 young adults to feel safe in contributing their lived and learned experiences to peers
30 and adults plays an important role in the crime prevention agenda, along with the
31 role-modelling of safeguarding skills. Based on the research findings, it could be
32 argued that young people are being failed by the current education system and
33 government in developing civic and legal understanding that could safeguard them
34 and others. Participatory practices such as world café and forum theatre can address
35 this issue more energetically than traditional teaching methods, with the
36 recommendation of small group discussion to enhance compassion generated from
37 lived experience sharing following information presentation to a wider cohort young
38 people and young adults.
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